

M. KAPLAN DIARIES - TRANSCRIPTION

(38)

1940 AUG 14 - 1940 OCT 30



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We must content ourselves with the empirical reality and derive from it the utmost knowledge and guidance. To succeed in this purpose, it is necessary to observe the same rule in our attempt to embrace our own will to live or personality in its massive fullness as we observe when we want to get an insight into the personality of one in whose welfare we are vitally concerned. The rule is: Exercise your own personality to the utmost. Use your memory, imagination and power of sympathetic understanding to the utmost. This is in essence an act of love. Likewise it is necessary for us to exert to the full the powers of our inner life to apprehend in all its wealth and complexity the will to live, if it is to yield us reliable data about the source of life and the way we should live.

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Wednesday, August 14, 1940

The general function of soterics may be described as that of reintegrating the totalities of life and experience which the mind with its analytic tendency has broken up. The main instance of that function is of course that of reintegrating religion and ethics into the organic unity which they possess in life. Another instance is that of reintegrating the elements that constitute salvation. We have found those elements to be divisible into two main categories: first those activities which flow from the two main biological instincts which make for the survival of the body (food and shelter) and for progeny and its survival (mating) and second, the surplusage of the energy connected with these instincts which cannot be used up in the two objectives named. Normally these two sets of activities should be interrelated and integrated so that they be mutually helpful and reenforcing. Instead, with the increasing trend to artificialize human life every type of activity is organized and dealt with as a world of its own. Much of the maladjustment in human life is the outcome of these artificial divisions and dichotomies.

A striking illustration of how these artificial divisions laid to frustration and the general failure to achieve a satisfying life is the divorce between work and play, which is one of the most noteworthy results of the increasing division of labor. The motto which proves how far we have gotten away from the natural tendency to live life organically and whole is the one which says: "work while you work and play while you play." (Wieman in ibid., p.126 refers to L. P. Jacks as proving in the Hilbert Journal some time before 1927 the futility and dangerous consequences of this division.) Wieman enumerates the evils which result from the artificial division between work and play as being the following: 1. "Work in which there is none of the spontaneity and creativity of free impulse becomes uninteresting or positively miserable. But where work is not interesting it cannot be highly efficient." On the other hand as work thus becomes less productive "play becomes ever extravagant increasingly." 2. . "When we turn away from work to hours of recreation for our enjoyment, for interest and zest in life, the work will become more and more disagreeable to us." 3. "As work becomes more stupefying and degrading, it destroys our capacity for enjoying our play....Pleasure as we see today becomes more vain, superficial and unsatisfying as work becomes more destructive of spiritual capacity." 4. "If the mind and heart of the workers are not in the work, if they are not interested in its management, they certainly will not protect it from evil management and from the exploitation of those who will use it altogether for their own selfish ends (ibid. 127-8)."

Wieman himself makes use of the foregoing facts to paint a moral about science and religion having to supplement each other. If it weren't that he uses religion in a much wider sense than the usual one one might characterize this moral as far fetched. But as illustration of the function of soterics to restore the organic character of

normal life the above facts are entirely relevant.

The more sophisticated the human being becomes, the more scientifically minded he grows the smaller the fragments into which his life becomes broken up. Religion and ethics have each in its way gropingly sought to restore the lost wholeness or "health," but they have done so in a manner unbeknown to themselves. And so we have the ditty about Humpty-dumpty who has had a great fall and we are told that all the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty-Dumpty together again. But what the king's horses and the king's men couldn't do soterics can do. If we are as determined to reintegrate what the mind has broken up into fragments or phases of reality as the scientists have proceeded zealously with the process of abstraction and differentiation(or disintegration) we shall make considerable progress in the improvement of human life both in the individual and in society as well as recover the power of insight into reality, which power has been impaired by the analytic faculty.

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Sunday, August 18, 1940

How much clarity the soteric approach can bring into religious thinking becomes evident in the case of a religious philosophy like that of Wieman's. Thus in their Normative Psychology of Religion God is defined more specifically than in Religious Experience v Scientific Method. "God is the growth of meaning and value in the world. This growth consists of increase in those connections between activities which make the activities mutually sustaining, mutually enhancing and mutually meaningful." If instead of identifying growth with God, they would identify it with salvation, they would find the concept of growth itself more fruitful without losing its connection with God. It is much truer to fact to say that to experience salvation means to experience growth in the meaning of one's life, that is, increase in the

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connections between the activities which enter within the horizon of one's personality, thereby enlarging that horizon. Insofar as God is the Power that makes for salvation or the increase of those connections, we have an immediate experience of His reality when we become aware of that increase. But that is not the same as identifying God with the growth of meaning.

The concept "growth of meaning" or increase of connections furnishes us with a highly important criterion by which we can determine whether the various objectives which when mutually integrated we have come to regard as constituting salvation, such as vocation, progeny, play, art and worship, live up to their function. If any of them fails to produce growth of meaning it is a positive hindrance to salvation. If our vocation, family relationships etc. shut out possible connections ~~as~~ among various phases of existence and activity, we are deprived of salvation.

Entirely in keeping with the foregoing conceptions of growth and salvation is the following definition of life: "Life is that which learns. It is that which establishes habits and acquires new habits."

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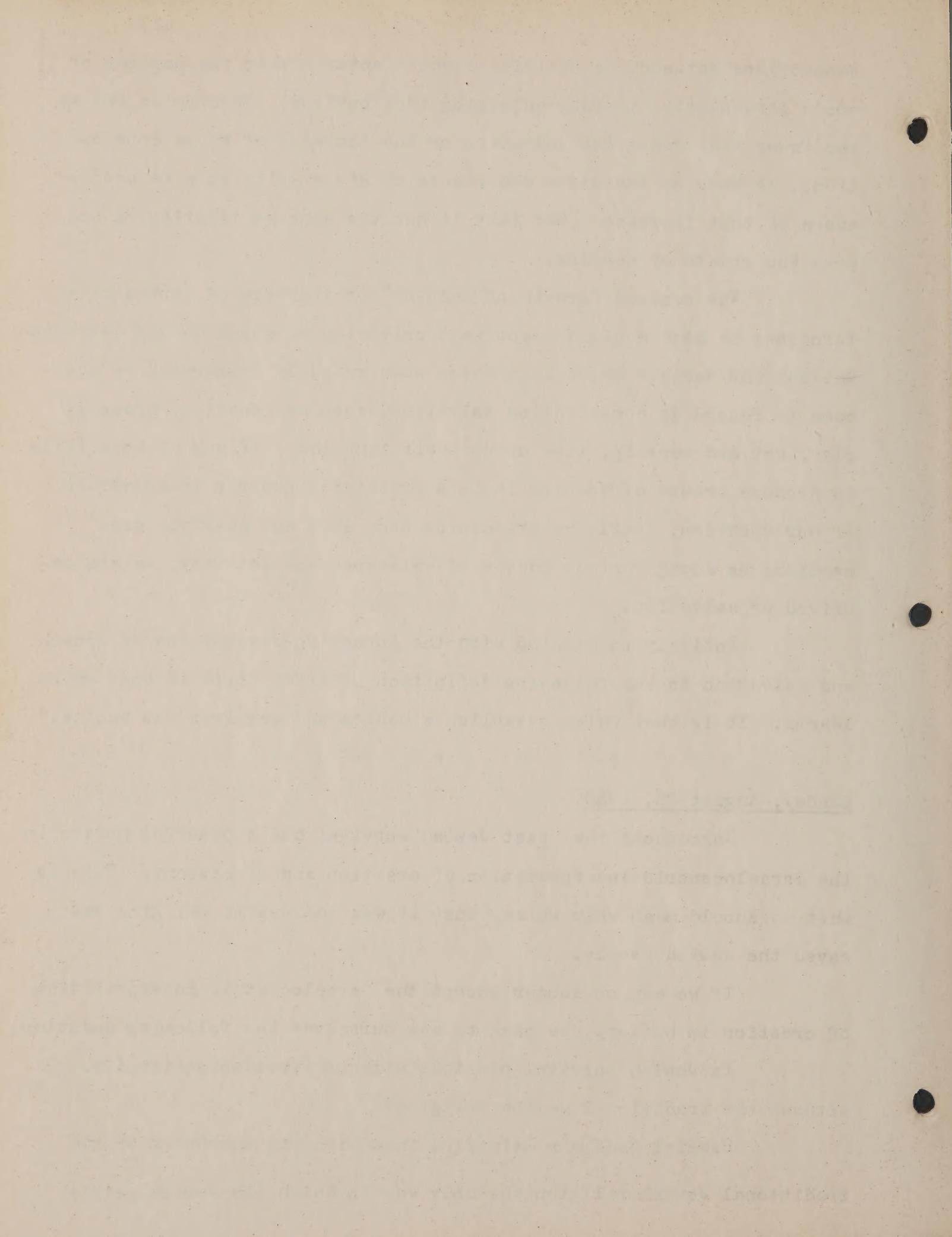
Sunday, August 25, 1950

Throughout the past Jewish survival had a powerful motive in the Israelocentric interpretation of creation and of history. This is what we should mean when we say that it was the Jewish religion that saved the Jewish people.

If we can no longer accept the ¹Israelocentric interpretation of creation in history, we have to ask ourselves the following question:

Is Jewish survival possible without Israelocentrism, i.e. without the traditional Jewish religion?

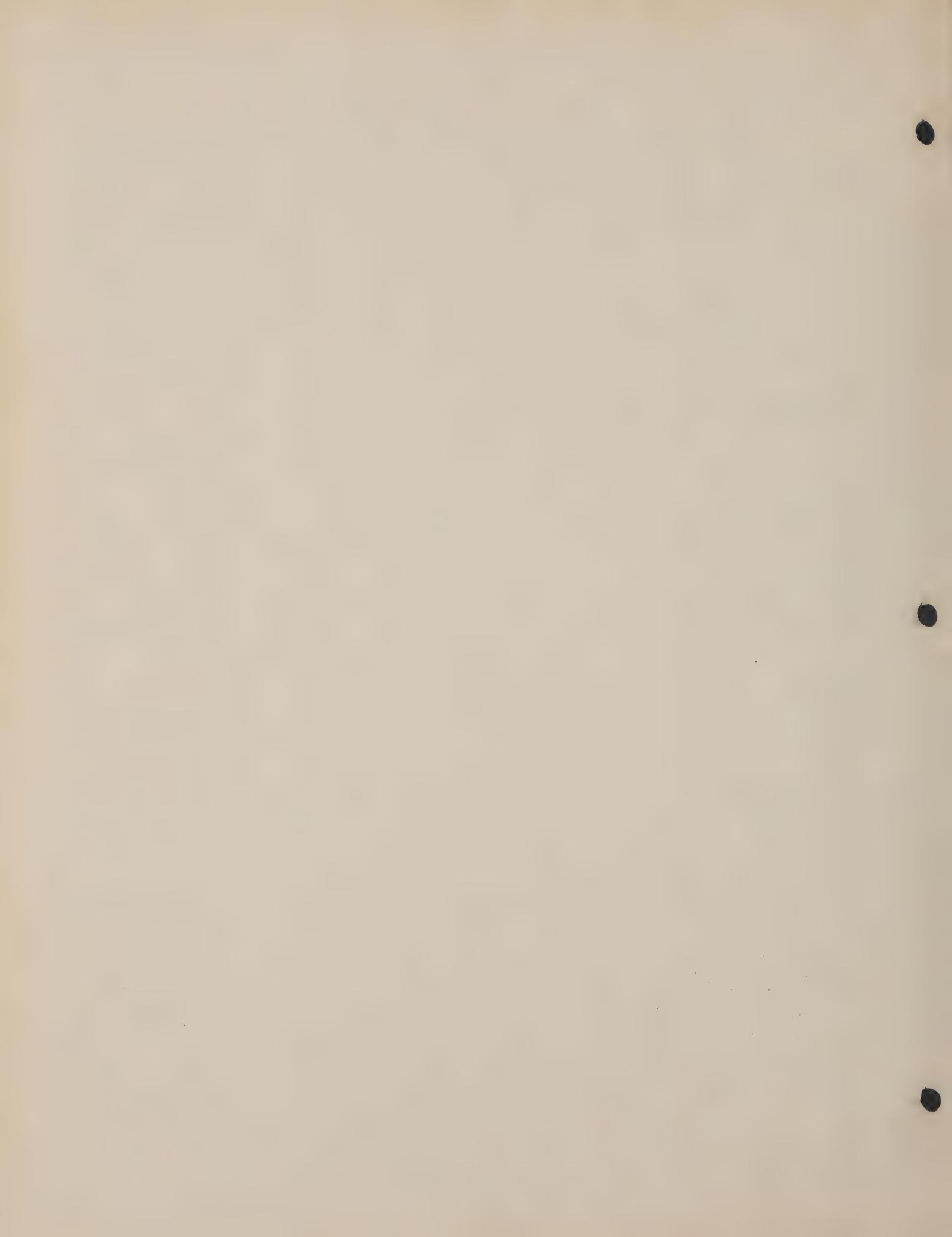
Ezekiel Kaufmann maintains that with the surrender of the traditional Jewish religion the only way in which the Jewish people



can survive is by acquiring a territory of its own and becoming a territorial nation like every other, Diaspora Judaism is bound to disappear.

The Reform movement by attempting to reinterpret the traditional Jewish religion assumes that 1) Jewish survival though possible without Israelocentrism is not possible without some equivalent for it, 2) that equivalent, which would constitute the modern religion of the Jew would be the only *raison d'être* of Jewish survival, 3) the equivalent of Israelocentrism is the belief that in the providential plan of human history the Jewish people has been entrusted with the function of upholding the truth of ethical monotheism.

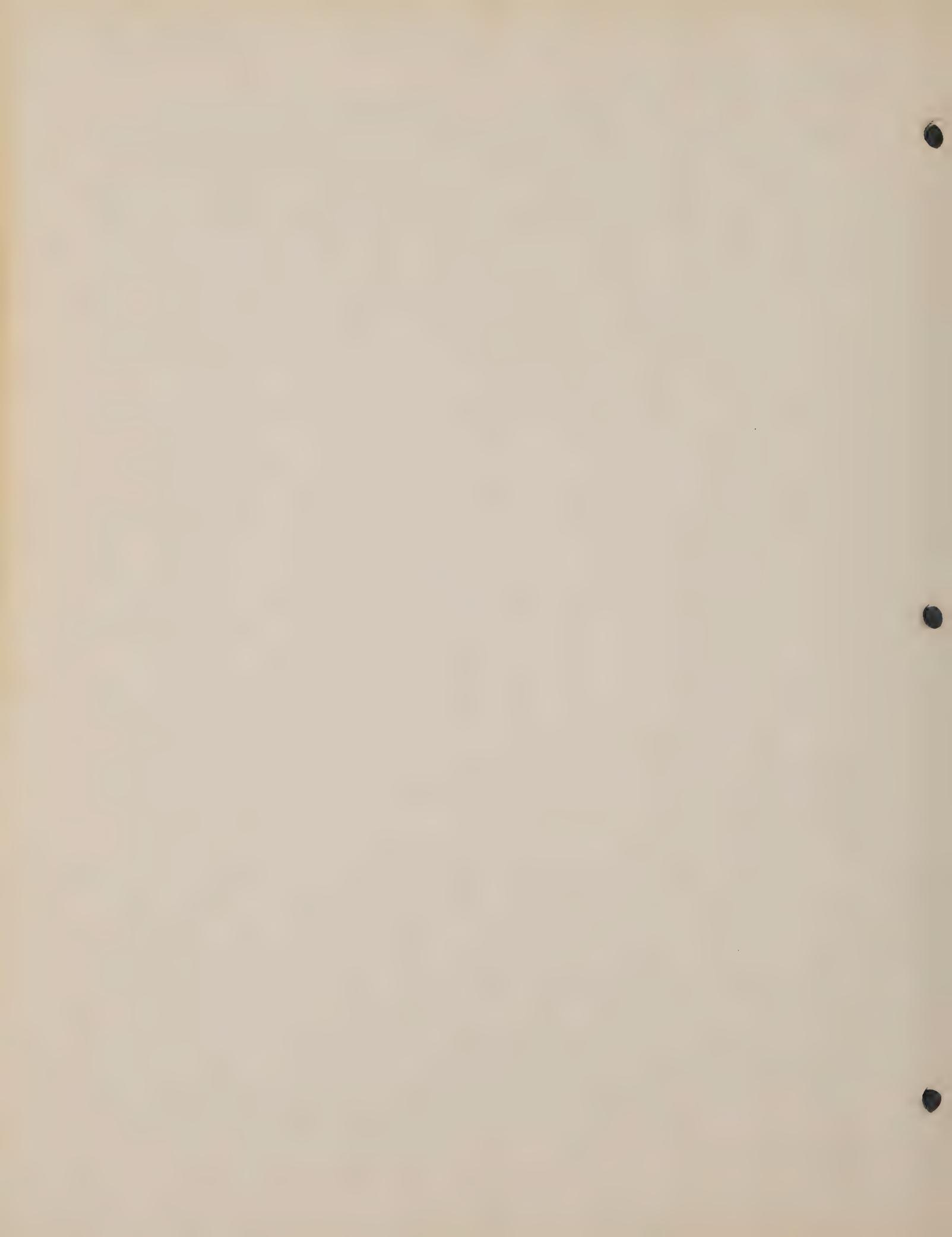
The Reconstructionist movement should maintain that 1) Jewish survival though possible without Israelocentrism is not possible without some equivalent for it; 2) The need for such equivalent is not unique. The assumption, therefore, that such an equivalent is the only *raison d'être* of the Jewish people places the entire problem of finding the proper equivalent in the wrong perspective; 3) The Jewish need for an equivalent for Israelocentrism or the traditional Jewish religion is part of the general need nowadays for an equivalent for the traditional anthropocentrism (or the traditional interpretation of the earth as the center of the cosmos and man as the purpose of creation); 4) Jewish survival in the diaspora depends upon the extent to which Jewish life can be made creative and inspiring; 5) Nothing could render Jewish life so creative and inspiring as finding an effective equivalent for traditional religion in general, i.e. for the traditional anthropocentrism. It is therefore not for the purpose of discovering a *raison d'être* for Jewish survival that we should be interested in the problem of religion in general and Jewish religion in particular, but as part of our very life as Jews and in order to enable that life to produce results which would render it inherently worthwhile both to ourselves and to the rest of the world.



Friday, August 30, 1940

After having kept out for a long time from this Journal all entries of a personal nature I find it difficult to resume recording them. As a matter of fact, the ideas on religion which fill the last 82 pages are as much part of my personal experience as what I do for and with others. That is perhaps one of the reasons I enter those ideas in this Journal instead of writing them up in a separate book. These ideas constitute the bulk of events in my very uneventful life. I imagine that without them there would hardly be any occasion for keeping a Journal. Being by nature, probably, an extrovert and yearning for activity and finding myself confined -- or doomed -- to a life of dull passivity, I try to make much ado about ideas, knowing full well that unless translated into action they turn sour. I hoped that Reconstructionism would afford me an outlet for action, that it would cause a number of people to gravitate toward me with whom I could begin to bring some order out of the chaos of Jewish life. But unfortunately even the few who constitute the editorial board of the magazine have to be continually prodded into attending to the few duties which their association with the magazine calls for. Of course Ira and Eugene Kohn are exceptions. But I wish that even they were more zealously active than they are.

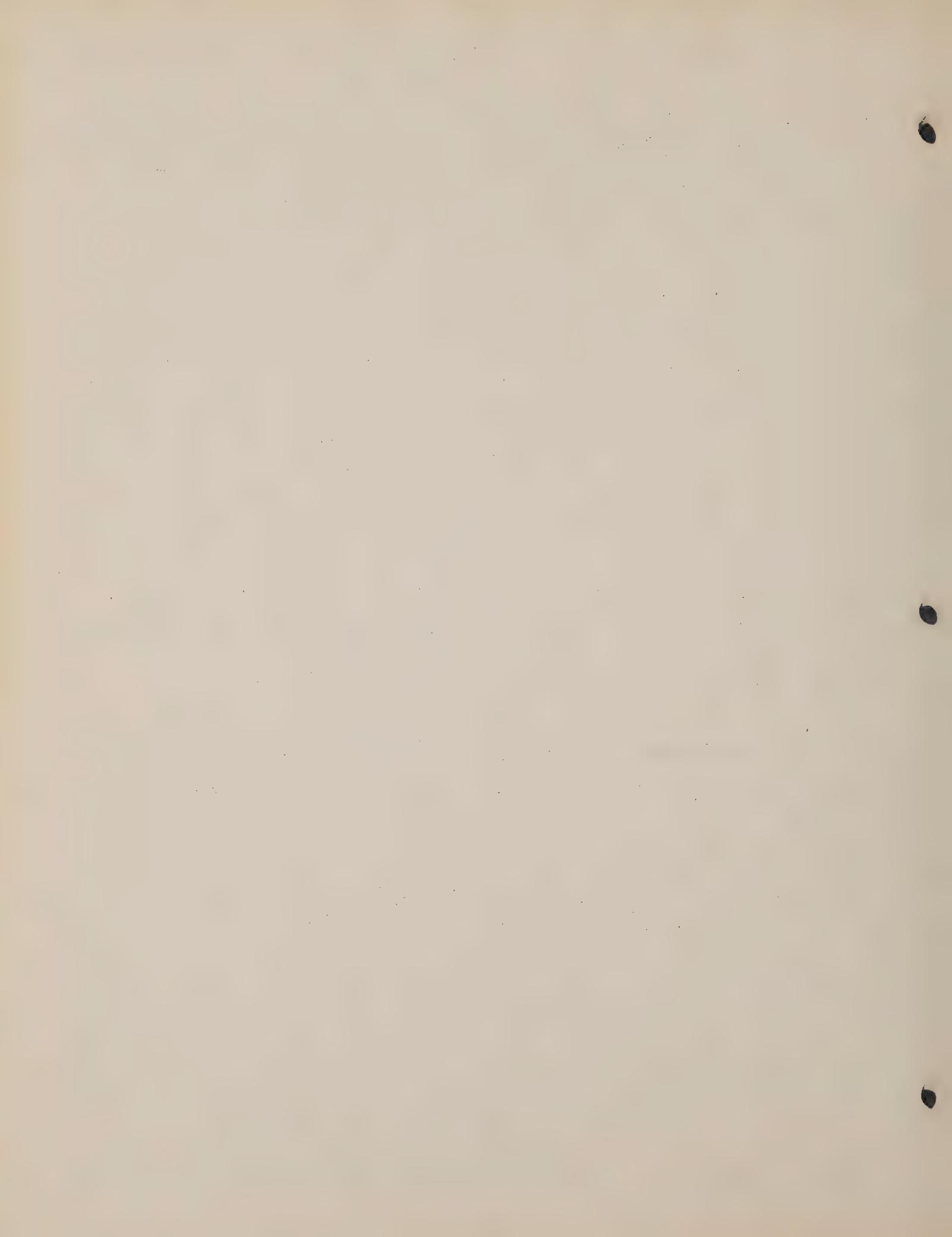
As usual the summer months, with their cessation of all constructive Jewish activity, have a very disheartening effect upon me. During a period of almost four months Jewish life is in a state of absolute coma. The strain and excitement of the High Holidays are probably the only way in which it is possible for that coma to be shaken off. But to me they feel highly unnatural, like the last flickers of a dying flame, the gasps for breath of one who is on his deathbed.



There is no reason in the world why a number of men who are really concerned with the reconstruction of Jewish life -- if there are any such -- should not get together somewhere by themselves during the summer and in concentrated fashion work on the burning problems of Jewish existence -- problems of religion, nationhood, art, ethics, etc.

Why do I find fault with Ira? Because here we have spent all these weeks together and how much we could have accomplished if he were as restless and eager to do something telling for Jewish life as I am! Just by chance I thought of working out together prayers based on the Psalms and already we have covered the first 29 of them. We sit down for an hour or two. I concentrate on a psalm and try to discover some significant life situation that might give it organic unity and constitute the basis for contemporary prayer. Ira jots down the principal ideas and then writes them up into prayer form. Now is there any reason why we should not have by this time gone through the entire book ~~for~~ of Psalms that way? It is certainly not my fault.

The tragic senselessness of Jewish disintegration was brought home to me the last couple of days through the death of Alice Seligsberg. I learned to know her through Miss Sampter who brought her to a group which I organized in the winter of 1916. (I have elsewhere a record of the discussions which took place at those meetings.) She had come from a background of completely assimilated German Jews who constituted the main supporting group of the Ethical Culture movement. Under the influence, probably of Miss Szold and Miss Sampter, and impelled by her own search after some kind of religious support and certainty she ^{elsewhere} of her entire family and entourage became a Zionist and eager to express her religious yearnings in a Jewish way. From time to time I would meet her ~~through~~ very rarely, and discuss the fundamental problems of

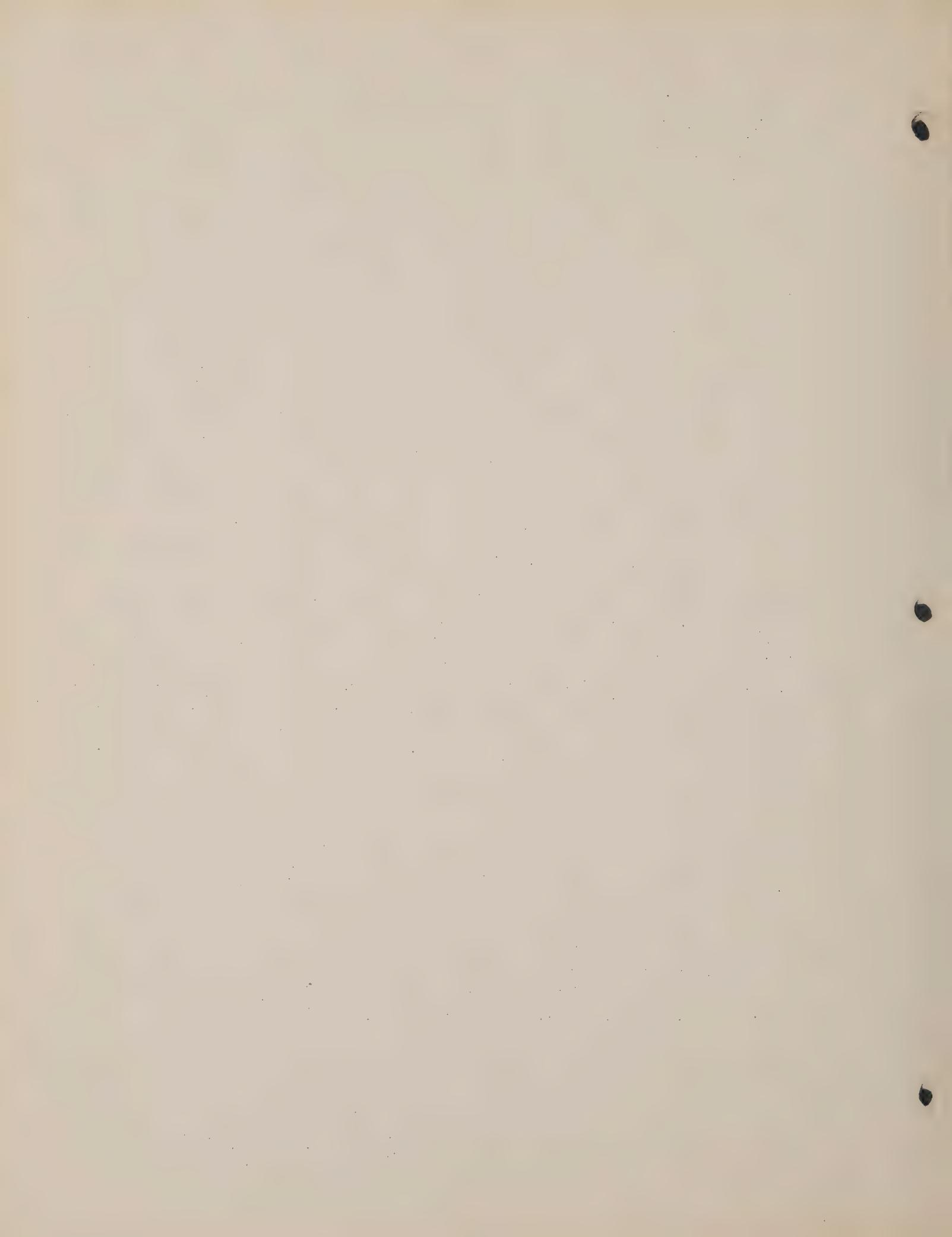


Jewish life. Her heart ached for the same reasons that mine does. If she had lived and had been strong, she would have made an excellent worker for Reconstructionism.

Last Tuesday night her brother Walter called me up and asked me to officiate. I went into the city the next morning to talk over the details of the funeral. He then told me that about five or six weeks ago she had spoken to him about her approaching end and had asked him to have me or Ira officiate at the funeral. I had him tell me about her life. He mentioned the fact that though the members of her family had not the least sympathy with her Zionist or religious interests, they respected her wishes and made it possible for her to observe the dietary laws and to keep the Sabbath. To the last Friday night of her life she had the Sabbath candles on her table.

It was then that I learned how she came to be interested in childwelfare work. Her brother is or was a trustee of the Hebrew Sheltering Guardian. This institution was established by a group of German Jews who were not accepted by an older group of Jews who ran the Hebrew Orphan Asylum. There was such bitter rivalry between those two institutions that they would frequently resort to litigation in their efforts to get children into their respective institutions. Miss Seligsberg's mother was the first one to do away with the prevalent custom of having all the orphans dressed alike, their heads shaved and go through ceremonial routines when the directors came around. Only recently has the rivalry between those two institutions ceased.

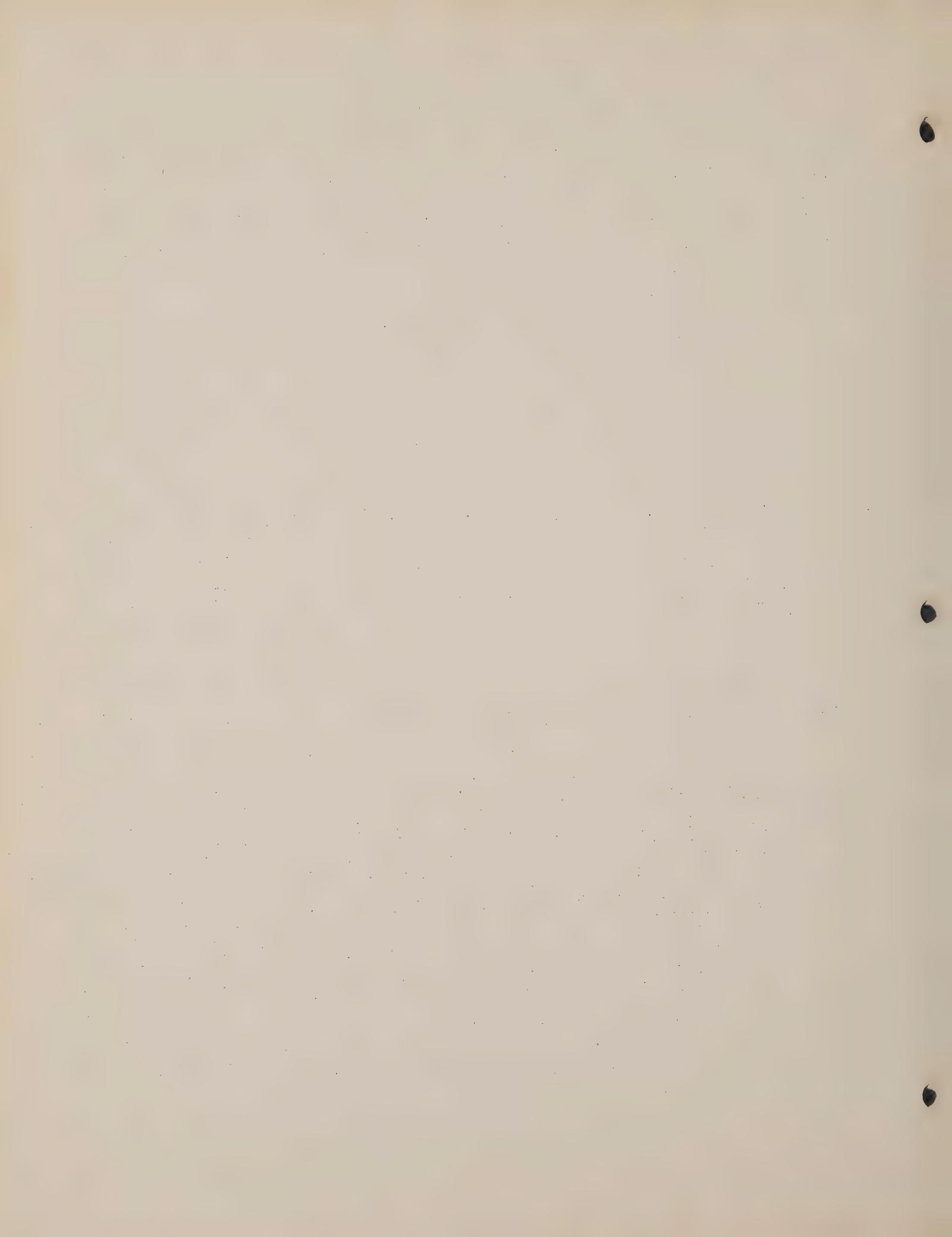
Now here are all the directors of these and similar Jewish institutions. Most of them have become thoroughly habbitized. But there are among them some very fine people with high ethical standards. I imagine that is true especially of some of the old families like the Seligsbergs who helped Adler organize his Ethical Culture movement. There could never be any direct and straightforward understanding



about the policy to be pursued by those institutions, from the stand-point of Judaism, because the main supporters were out and out assimilationists, while the parents of the children and the general community would have resented turning the Jewish children into "goyim." Hence the ambiguous Jewishness of the Reformist type. The Sunday School, the Confirmation and a few other cold formalities conducted by people who themselves had no interest in them.

The East European Jews, especially in Russia, either become outright "goyim" or are on the way toward working out some genuine Jewish adjustment to the modern world. The German Jews developed a peculiar kind of ambiguous position, which is neither completely Jewish nor completely goyish. One has only to take a look, e.g. at the cemetery of the Ethical Culture Society, which I saw for the first time yesterday, to realize what a failure these Jews who wanted to become thoroughly dejudaized, made of their efforts at assimilation. It seems to me as much of a ghetto as there ever was one. The Ethical Culture School is usually spoken of by Gentiles as a Jewish School, not in a derogatory spirit, but for purely descriptive purposes.

Of course if we want to be fair we should ascribe this difference between the way the German Jews dealt with the question of assimilation and the way the East European Jews dealt with it to the difference between the attitude of the East European governments toward the Jews and that of the western governments. The former remained unequivocally medieval, the latter posed as liberal and actually were ambiguous in their tolerance of the Jews. This ambiguous attitude of the western governments is responsible for the failure of Jews in western lands to be either thoroughgoing Jews or thoroughgoing goyim.



Having to officiate at a funeral of this kind was a new and difficult experience for me. If it were not for her wishes, her brother Walter would have asked Dr. Elliot, the present leader of the Ethical Culture Society to officiate. I knew that most of the people present would be these marrano Jews. The rest I knew would be her Zionist and Hadassah friends and associates. I struggled several hours to find an idea that would offend neither group and appeal to both.

As I searched for such an idea, it occurred to me that I was applying a process of thought similar to the one I employ when I try to find some inner unity to a psalm. Most of the psalms are like most human beings, a mass of incongruous ideas. To find meaning, whether in a psalm or in a person I catch myself searching for some organic unity into which I might fit in all the diverse aspirations expressed by them.

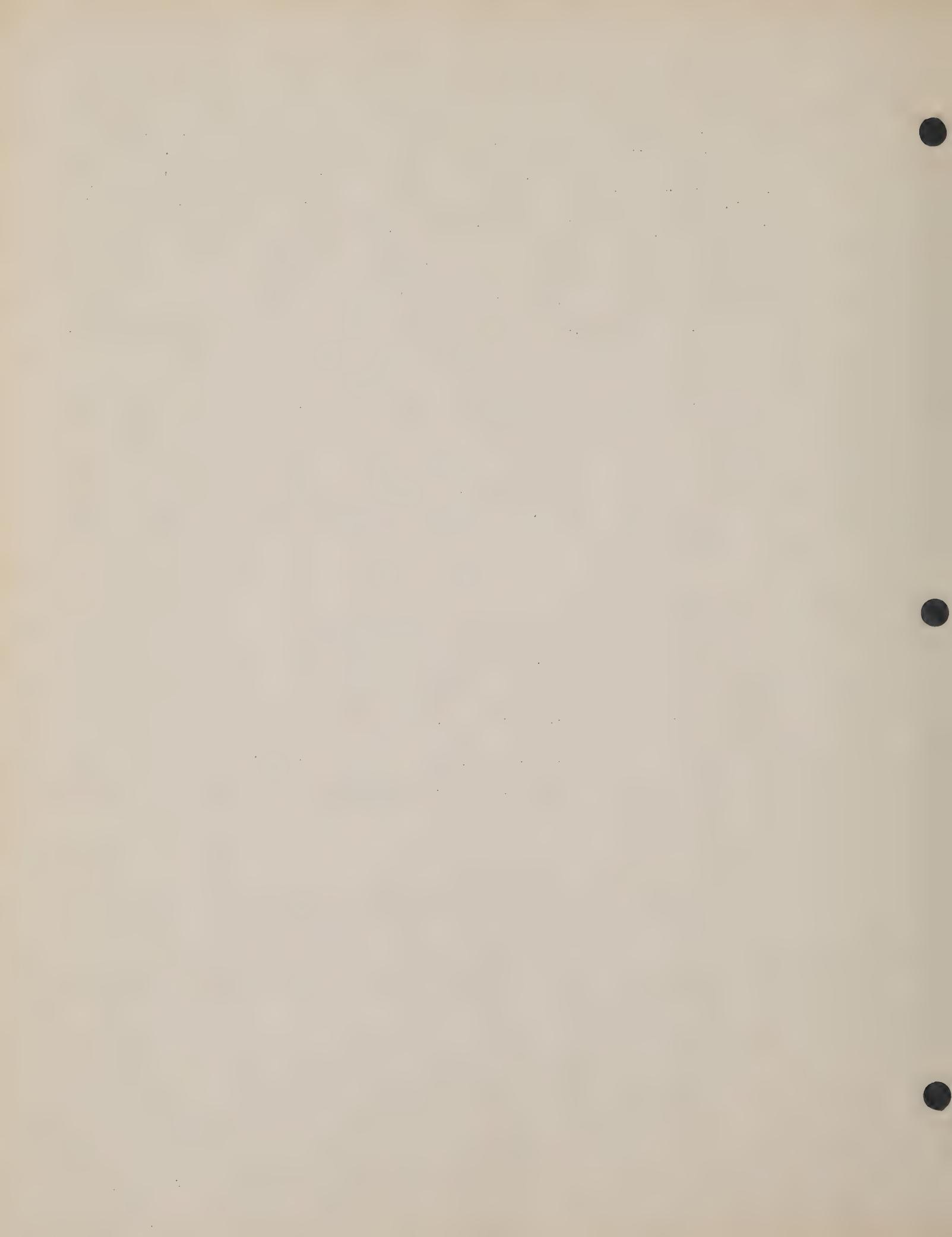
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Saturday, August 31, 1940

It seems to me that soterics should make it possible for religion, education and ethics to be formulated in such a way as to remove the main difficulty that is always experienced when any one of these studies is dealt with by itself. That is the difficulty of having to assume the conclusions of the other two studies, without being able to validate them adequately.

The nineteenth century theologians were wont to identify the spirit with freedom. It would be much more correct to identify the spirit with creativity and to understand by creativity the synthesis of freedom and necessity.

The concept of creativity as thus defined has important bearings on ~~rulegkawx~~ ethics, education and religion. In religion it helps us hold in our mind the paradoxical fact about reality (not as it is in the abstract but) as it is related to man's salvation, namely,



that God as the power that makes for salvation represents the synthesis of necessity and freedom.

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Thursday, September 5, 1940

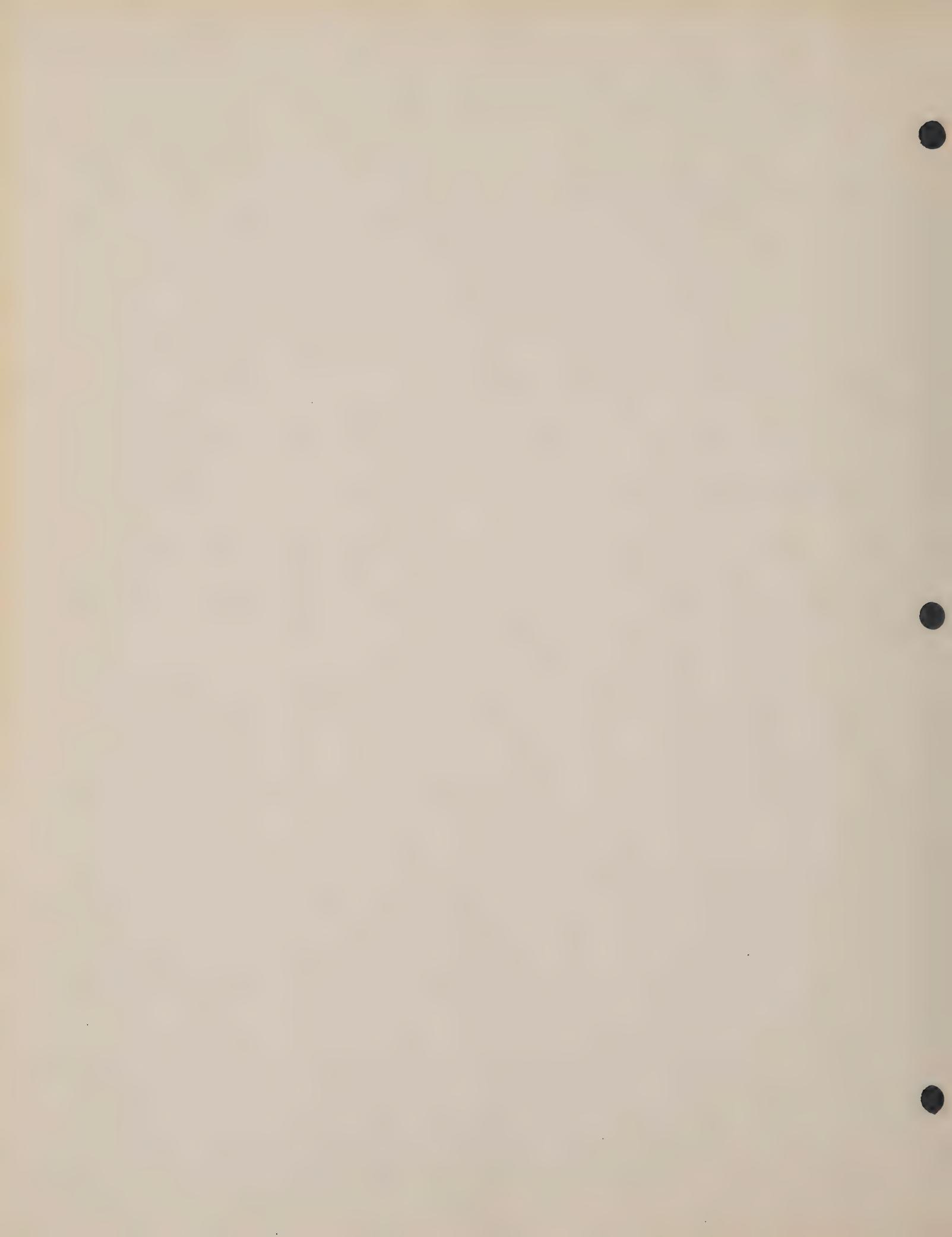
I looked forward with a great deal of eagerness to the conference of Reconstructionist editors which had been scheduled for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday this week and to the Reconstructionist Institute which was to have taken place this weekend. The conference petered out and the Institute had to be called off.

Last night I attended the meeting of the committee which is to take charge of the demonstration school on West End Ave., cor. 100 St.

Our salvation or self-realization as persons is possible only through a process which we share, and insofar as we share, with a Power not ourselves that makes for salvation.

The process, to be one that enables us to achieve salvation, must avoid two mistakes: one is that of denying our share in it and ascribing ~~to~~ it entirely to God, and the other is denying the share in it of a Power not ourselves. Theocracy did the first: totalitarianism does the second. Democracy, ~~to~~ the extent that it is genuine, is based on the assumption that the process of law, of social and economic arrangements are human attempts to embody the will of God for the salvation of man, but they can be nothing more than progressive approximations since the actual objective will of God is not in ourselves, is ever beyond us.

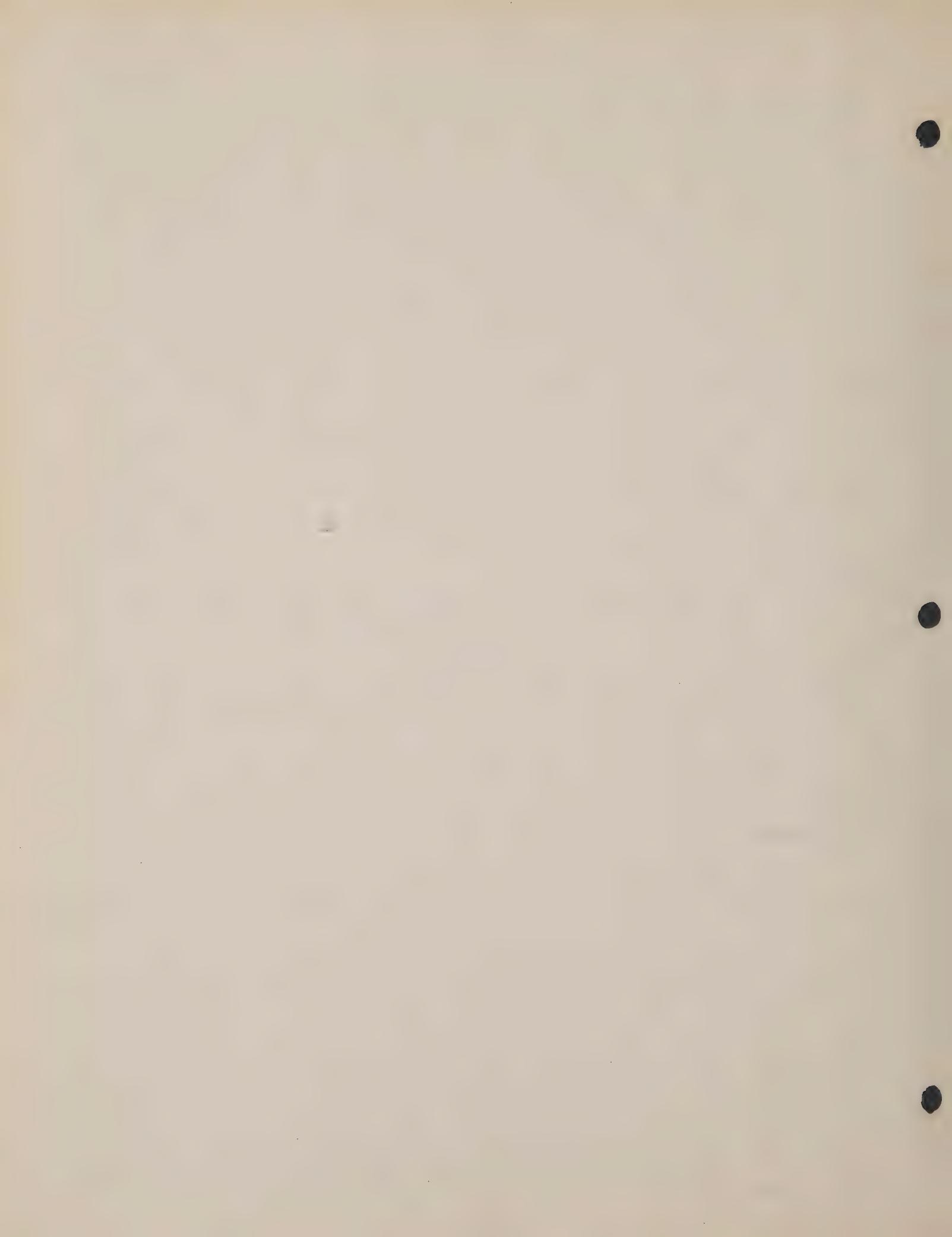
The process that enables us to achieve salvation consists of knowledge, society, art. Science is the operation of the Power not ourselves in knowledge insofar as it is subject to reason. Democracy is operation of Power not ourselves in society insofar as it is subject



to social justice and aesthetic creativity is the operation of ~~REASON~~ Power not ourselves in art insofar as it expresses the universal inwardness of human experience. Thus science, democracy and aesthetic creativity imply the existence of norms that transcend individual or group attainments. By these norms are those attainments evaluated. These norms are themselves such by reason of the fact that they are not disparate but mutually integral and the expression of objective reality from the standpoint of its relation to man's salvation. That means that the norms emanate from the Power not ourselves that makes for our salvation.

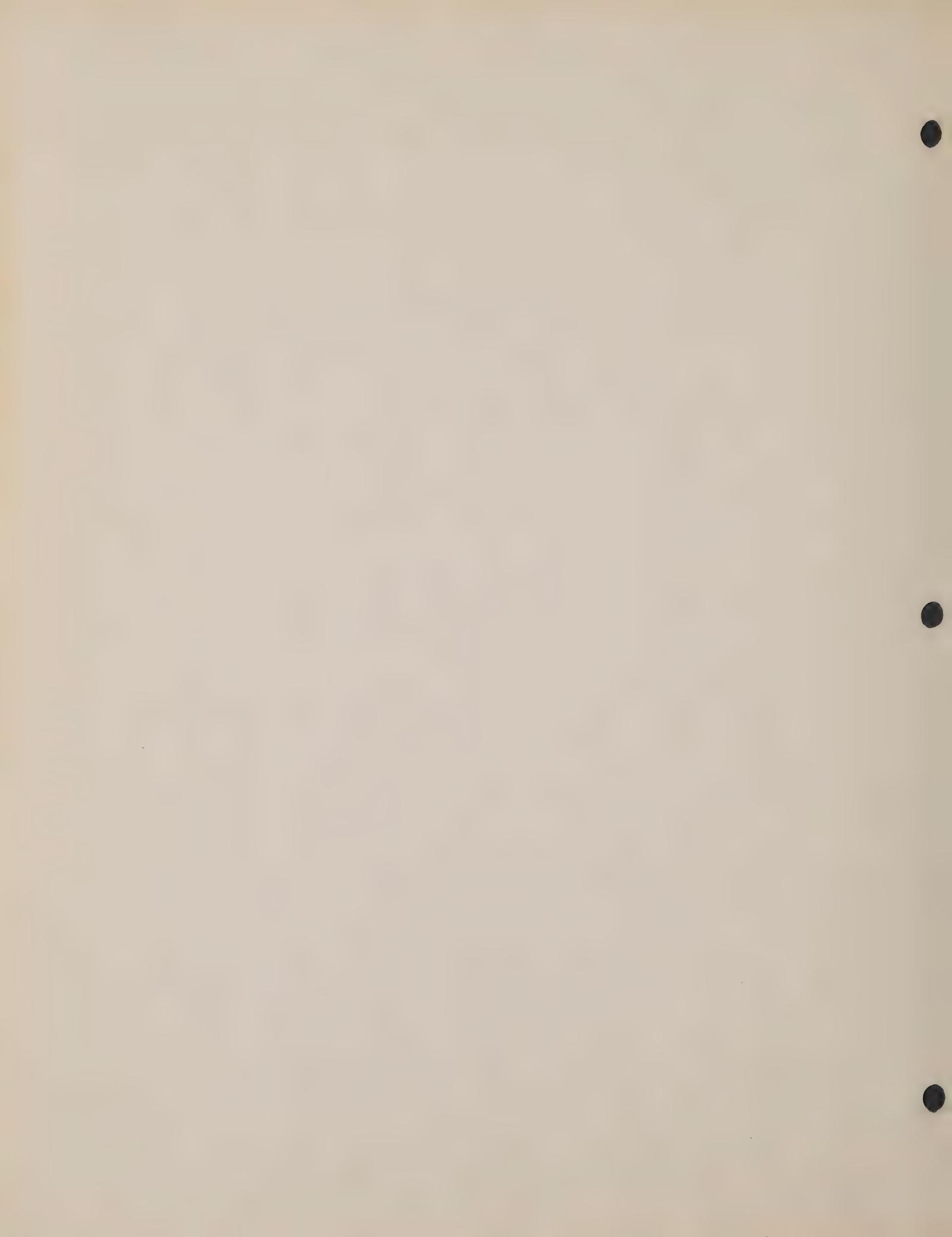
From the foregoing it follows that reason, social justice and the universal inwardness of human experience are phases of the same reality. Reason represents the cognitive, social justice the ~~KNOWLEDGE~~ conative and universal inwardness the emotional phase of reality. We must therefore expect that each will display the characteristics of the other two. It is only intellectual pride that impels us to give primary reason and to assimilate social justice to it by speaking of social justice as reason in society. We do the same with the universal inwardness of experiences and speak of reason in art. It were much truer to use the three phases interchangeably and speak of justice in the ~~KNOWLEDGE~~ observation of facts as well as reason in society, etc.

That democracy is actually the application of reason to social relations becomes evident when we note how very much like the process of reasoning genuine democracy functions. George A. Coe thus describes democracy: "Democracy is, rather, a way of what is popularly called 'making up our minds.' It has to do with cognitive process and the cognitive function. Democracy is a pooling of the cognitive resources for two or more persons. It is not merely the accumulating of like opinions for it invites the challenging of all opinions. Rather it is a cooperative endeavor after objectivity, and a conjoint handling of our ignorance



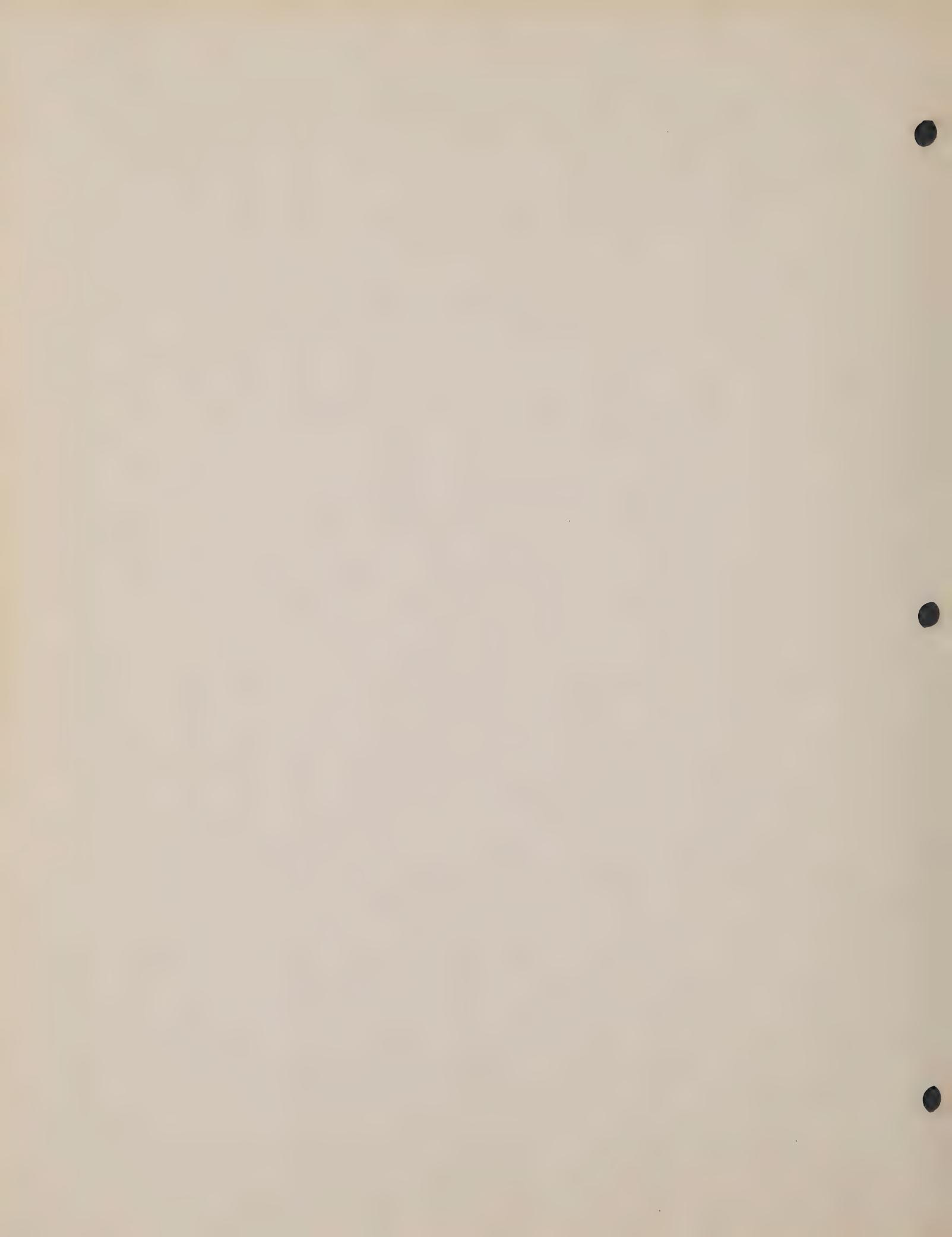
and our disagreements. It includes the cooperative attainment of convictions; suspensions of judgment, likewise cooperatively achieved; the putting of what we cooperatively think into cooperative action, and likewise cooperative postponement of action that may be desired by some or even all of the participants...Democracy is cooperative cognition engaged in the performance of its functions in the maintenance and enhancement of life." (The Crux of the Problem in "Religious Education," July-Sept., 1940). Further on he says: "Democracy is a kind of control then; but it is a self-limiting kind. It guides, restrains and hinders, coordinates, coerces but with self-created restrictions...cooperative thinking is per se a call to action as an individual. Here we come upon the paradox of democracy. What is most individual and what is super-individual are sought and found at the same point."

That the Power that makes for salvation is not ourselves is implied in the protests of the religionists against the totalitarian systems. There is no question that the emphases on "not ourselves" in the conception of the soteric Power affects radically the meaning of the aim and the process of salvation. It affects, among other things, the relation of the individual to the state. If the Power that makes for salvation is ourselves then the state is either God or His sole representative to whom the individual must render unqualified allegiance. There can be no appeal to any higher court. The Macintosh case helps us realize the practical results that follow from the one or the other view. Prof. Macintosh applied for naturalization. He was asked whether he would bear arms for the U.S. and he replied that he would do so only in case he was convinced that the war in question was in accordance with the divine will. His application was denied and the denial was sustained by the Supreme Court of the U.S. in a majority decision. The majority maintained that "the government must go forward upon the assumption..."



that unqualified allegiance to the nation and submission and obedience to the laws of the land...are not inconsistent with the will of God." Hughes in a dissenting opinion reasoned that the majority of the court here made allegiance to God subordinate to allegiance to the state and this is "directly opposed to the spirit of our institutions and to the historic practice of the Congress." "The supremacy of the conscience within its proper field is one of our most precious traditions. " "What this field is under our system of government presents in part a question of constitutional law and also in part one of legislative policy in avoiding unnecessary clashes with the dictates of conscience."

Thus the belief in God and the dictates of conscience, to which we might add the dictates of reason, are challengers to the state, i.e. to men's own efforts to achieve salvation in accordance with what they consider best for themselves. What is best is defined for them by what they consider not only their interests but also their God, their conscience and their reason. When an individual or a minority challenges them in the name of God, conscience or reason the tendency is, as the majority opinion indicates, for those in power to take advantage of their position and to impose their will on the recalcitrant individual or minority. In doing so they take care to veil this fact and to maintain that by virtue of the fact that they have the power and constitute the majority, ipso facto, they are better qualified to interpret God's will, conscience or reason. Such a procedure takes away from God, conscience or reason their independence of human wishes, interests and power and makes them merely (?p.253) terms for majority or dictatorial supremacy. In other words God is the Power who is none other than ourselves engaged in the process of achieving what we in our own omniscient wisdom regard as our salvation. This proves how far from comprehending the true meaning of democracy are even men like those who constitute the Supreme Court of the United States.



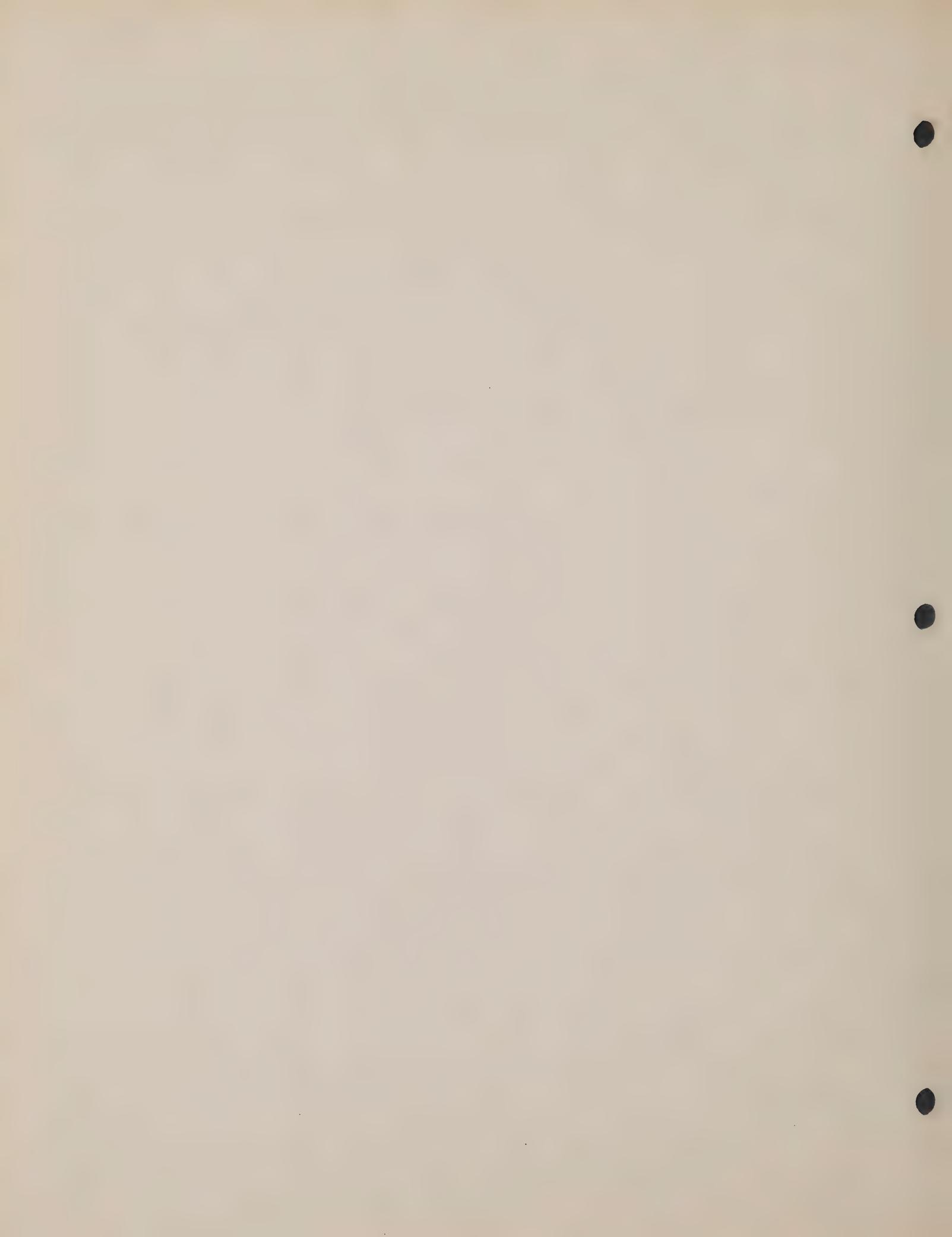
The real difficulty with democracy is that it presupposes an attitude of mind on the part of the average citizen which enables him to maintain the proper equilibrium between allegiance to his country and allegiance to a God who though manifest in the life of his country ~~is~~ infinitely transcends it. The average person can understand only one of two things, either God has nothing to do with country as such, or God is none other than one's own country. The third alternative upon which alone democracy can rest its case calls for long habituation in a new way of thinking, one in which God is identified with the actual life of one's country yet not conceived as being entirely subsumed within it. This is the only possible basis for the synthesis of loyalty and self-criticism.

That is the root of the difficulty which is responsible for the inability of the average citizen to get rid of the false dichotomy between the secular and the religious. When that distinction was made in the Middle Ages there was no thought of treating the two as coordinate realms. The secular was definitely recognized as subservient to the religious. To that extent there was really no sharp dichotomy between the two. Nowadays however the secular occupies the center of human interest and the religious if at all considered is thought of as a world entirely apart. It is apparent that such a conception of the relation of the religious to the secular is possible only because the conception of God and that of salvation are abstracted from their organic context and treated disparately and independently of each other.

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Friday, September 6, 1940

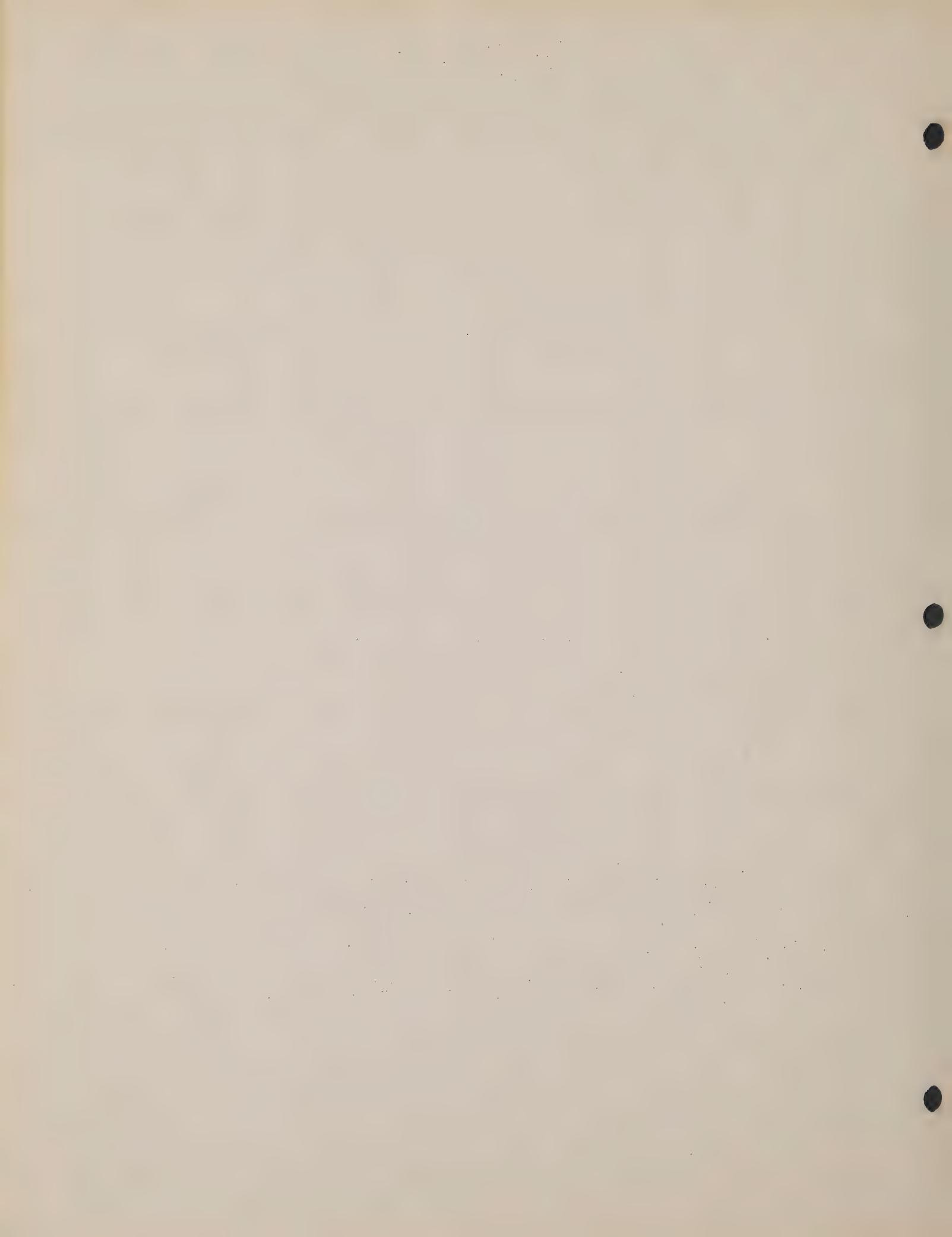
Germane to the problem of conceiving God or the Power etc. as transcendent (not ourselves) is the question of sacredness of personality and inalienable rights. If God is to be conceived as immanent only, then ~~whatever~~ whatever rights the individual possesses are conferred



upon him entirely by the group to which he belongs. Apart from that group he is without rights as he would be without food. A right, viewed thus, is a quid pro quo arrangement between the group and the individual. In exchange for that right which the group confers on the individual, he is expected to perform certain duties and accept certain responsibilities. This conforms with the "Leviathan" conception of the state. There can be nothing inalienable about rights.

This argument might with equal truth be reversed, and stated thus: If rights are to be conceived as alienable and as nothing more than a quid pro quo arrangement among the members of a group, then the Power etc. is immanent only within the group and does not transcend it.

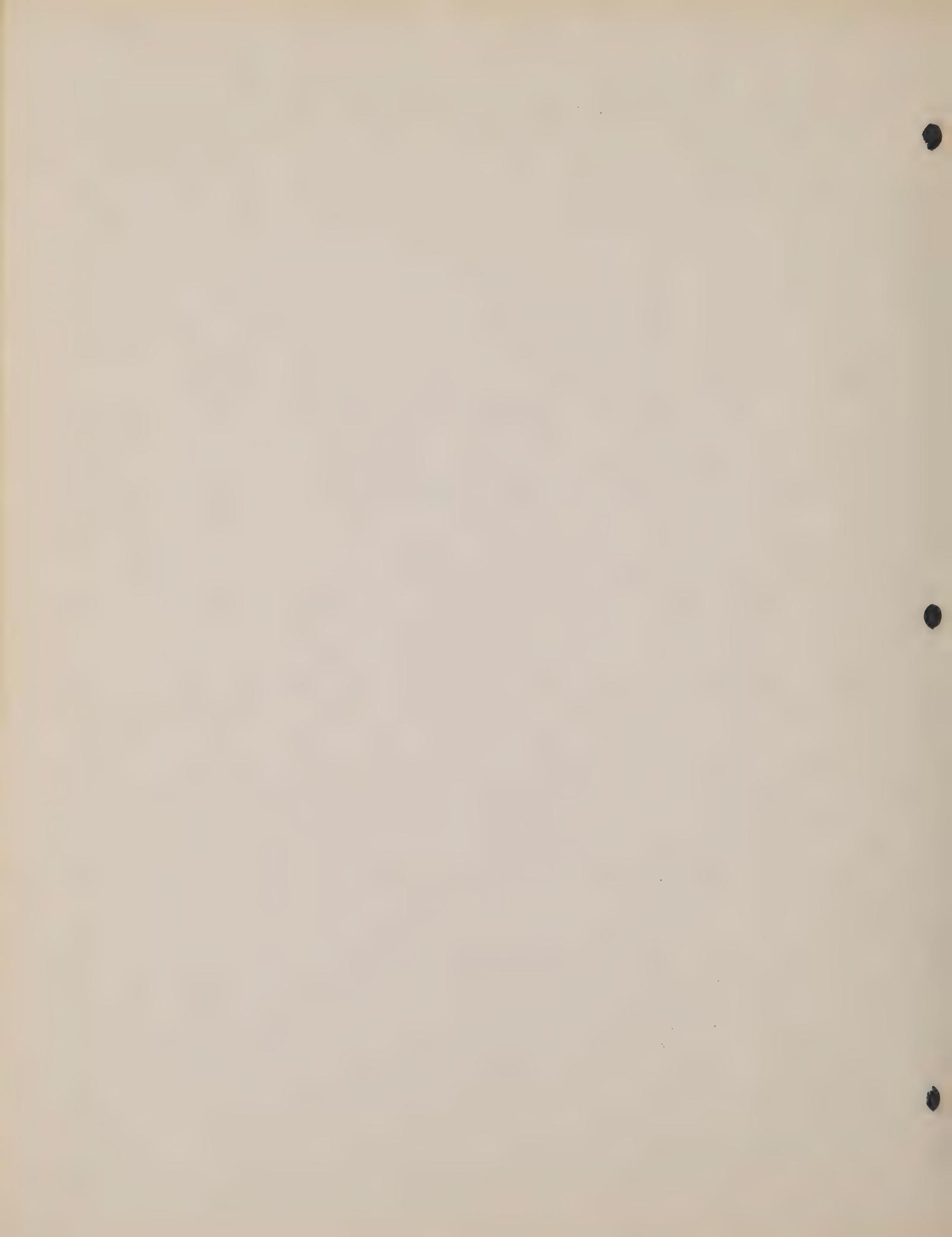
The same applies to personality. If God is immanent only, then personality is nothing more than the product of the group or groups to which the individual belongs. In that case sacredness has no meaning when applied to personality, since the society from which it derives its existence is itself not sacred. For, why should any group that merely represents itself be more sacred than any other object that exists than a stone, a bird or a tree? Sacredness that is not merely tabu by reason of some fears connected with any real or imaginary being or object can have only one other meaning, namely relationship to God or the Power, etc. that transcends human life, that is cosmic and inherent in what is most important to the cosmos, i.e. to its purpose. In other words personality to be sacred must either directly or indirectly through the society of which the individual is a member have or be conscious of some relationship to God or the Power etc. What is to prevent any group from arrogating to itself exclusively just such sacredness? The Jews and other peoples did it in the past and the Germans do it today. The only possibility of preventing any misapplication of the sense or concept of sacredness by applying it too narrowly or to the wrong groups and individuals is to fall back upon



our concept of salvation. If people were so conditioned as to regard the domination of our own particular group the sine qua non of our own self realization then there is no way of convincing them that other groups are equally capable of and entitled to salvation. And if they have the necessary means of enforcing their own exclusive conceptions of, salvation and sacredness, then that is the end of the argument and the decision has to be left to the sword and to the forces of inner dis-integration to convince the members of such a group that they are wrong. This is actually the lesson of history, and this its meaning.

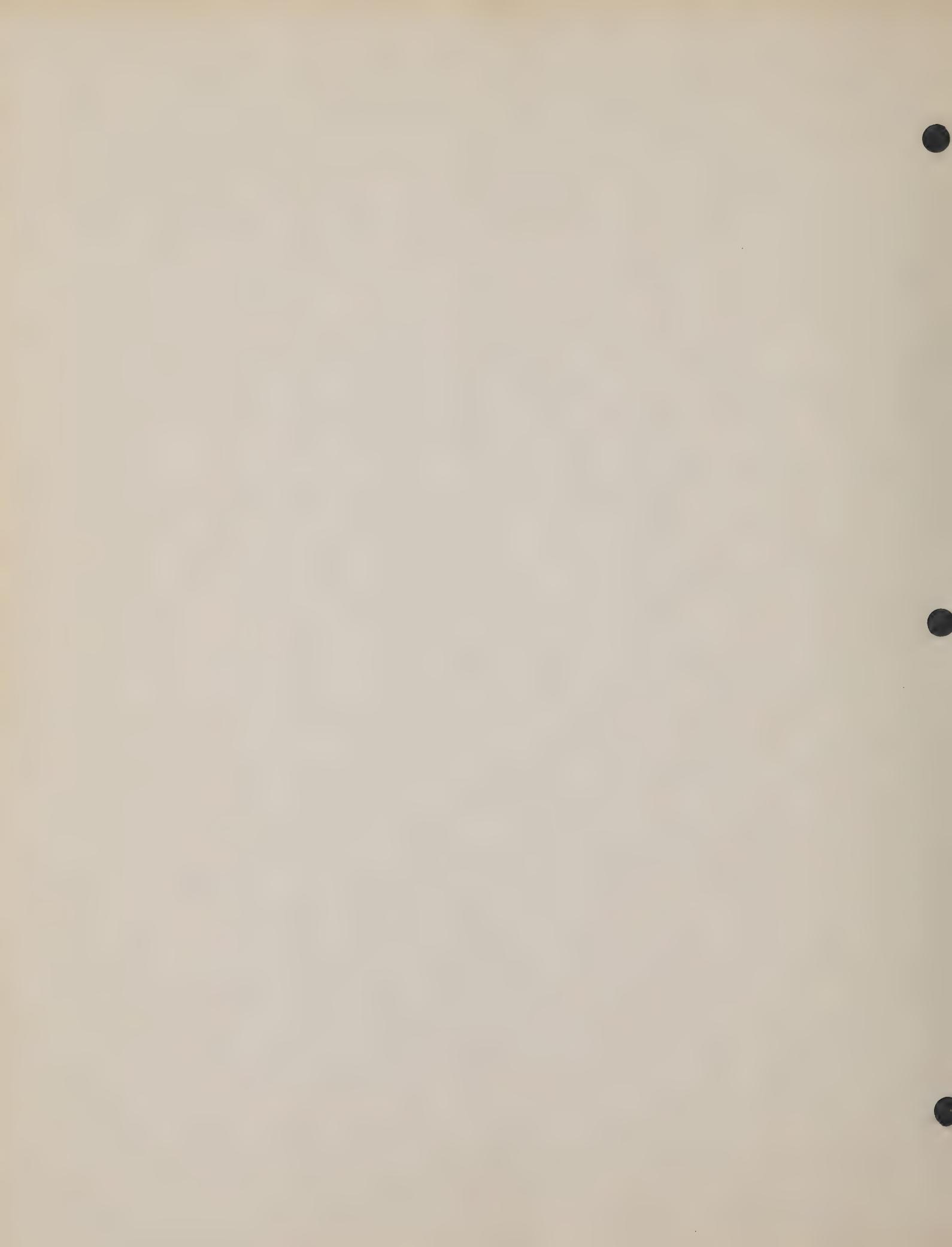
When, therefore, the defenders of democracy keep on insisting that they champion the sacredness of personality in contrast with those who subscribe to totalitarianism, they merely display their ignorance and superficiality. The very doctrine of the image of God upon which the sacredness of personality if presumably based, did not prevent either Judaism or Christianity from being in the past totalitarian and from combating democracy and the freedom of the individual. The appeal to traditional religion or the historical religions in their traditional form to prove the inherent truth or value of democracy is entirely misplaced. There will never be any genuine enthusiasm for democracy comparable to that developed by the totalitarian states for fascism, so long as the advocates of democracy are afraid to acknowledge frankly and openly that it represents a break with traditional religion and a higher development in man's spiritual life than was possible in the past. Fascism and Nazism are as a matter of fact merely transferring to their own peoples the spirit of exclusive salvationism which characterized the historical religions in their traditional form. If there is to be any hope for mankind as a whole, and especially for weak and struggling minorities, it is this spirit of exclusive salvationism which must be fought.

From all of which it becomes evident that of the three con-



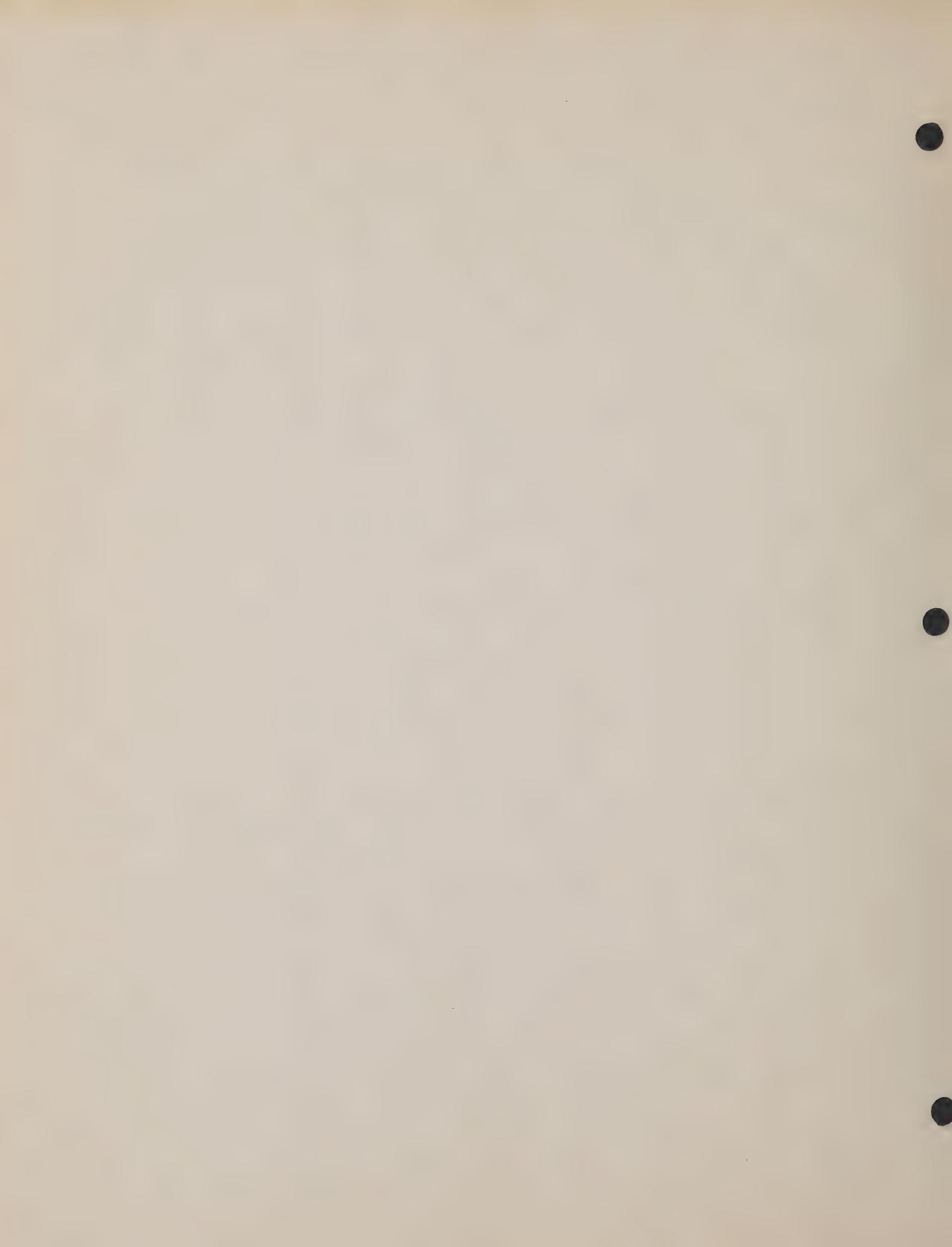
cepts "Power," "process" and "life" which are mutually integral in soterics, the nuclear concept is the one we have of life, and its enhancement. We must first state our assumptions concerning salvation. It is there that the fundamental differences between traditional and modern religion, ethics and politics will emerge. Likewise will the fundamental differences between democracy and totalitarianism emerge at that point.

To begin with, what is our assumption concerning the eligibility to salvation? For the present we must understand by salvation the realization of those possibilities of human nature which constitute its differentia from the sub-human. With this conception of salvation in mind, our first question is: Are all human beings, qua human beings irrespective of race, color, creed or nationality eligible to salvation? When we talk about ethical religion or religious democracy, it seems to me that this should be the first point we should stress. And if our concern is in improving the status of religious education, what more than any other assumption than the foregoing out to be made the object of instruction? If religious educators were really consumed with zeal for bettering human life by means of religion they would apply their ingenuity and skill directly and immediately to the task of inculcating the foregoing assumption, and all else that is desirable in religious education would follow inevitably. Instead they spend that ingenuity upon "concept spinning" and pure verbalisms and never get down to concrete facts and realities. They are preoccupied not with life but with its symbols and myths. One of them casually refers to an exclusive suburb where no Jews are permitted to live and which has a progressive public school. It does not apparently occur to the speaker that a school which is situated in such an exclusive suburb cannot really be progressive if it does nothing to break down the spirit of exclusiveness. Highly developed technics in the art of communicating



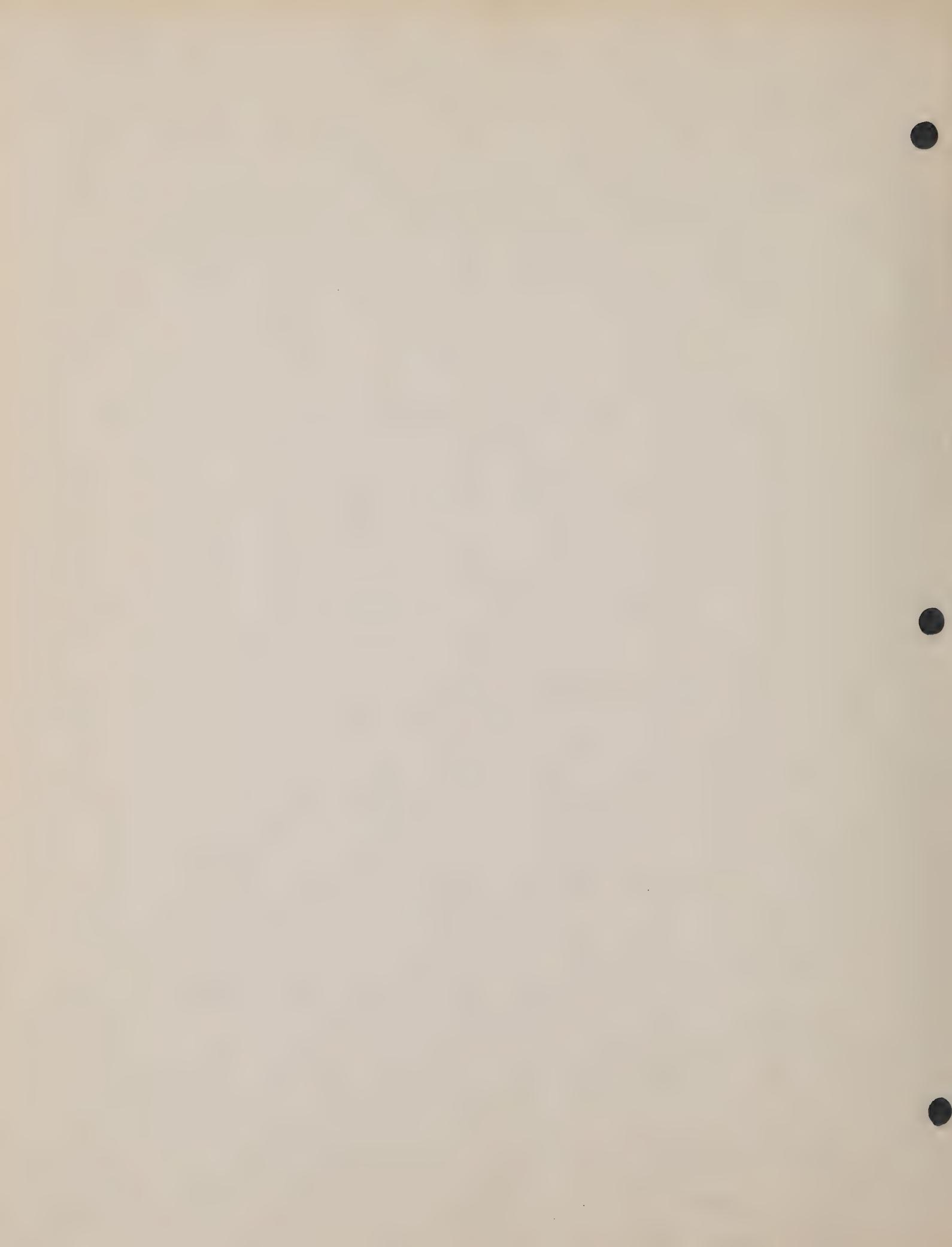
information and attitude does not constitute progress. The kind of information and attitudes transmitted is what matters.

It seems to me that the Marxian theory of the class of struggle and methods of production as the determinants of ethical codes and human ideals breaks down when we come to study the history of the various notions concerning eligibility to salvation. There is no question that in the past there was a strong tendency to consider salvation as the privilege of the few and not of the many. Despite the efforts of social reformers to democratize the notion of eligibility, their epigones would always manage to narrow it down to those who were most like themselves in background, outlook or attainments. In all historic conceptions of salvation it is only the elite who enjoy it while the masses ~~and~~ are excluded from it. The philosophers regarded only philosophers as eligible for their kind of salvation -- intellectual communion with (or love of) God. The theologians regarded only the elect of God (who usually coincided with those who accepted implicitly their theologies) as the only ones who were eligible, while the rest were damned. But what is of interest is that those eligible for salvation were as a rule not the economically powerful or successful. On the contrary, from an economic standpoint, they might indeed be total failures. It almost seems as though the entire soteric evaluation or set of values was calculated to criticize and offset the set of values which helped to confirm the ruling class in their possession of power. Would it be perhaps correct to say that on the whole it was the exploited classes, or those who represented them, that formulated theories of salvation? That certainly would not be true of Plato or Aristotle. Nevertheless one can hardly consider the Platonic-Aristotelean conception of salvation (or selfrealization as Aristotle was the first to call it) as reflecting merely the ideals of their own class. There is



too much of implied criticism of their own class and their ideals in that conception of salvation to consider it a true reflection. All this indicates that in the conception of salvation we have an attempt to formulate a meaning of life that is independent of the class struggle. This does not, however, negate the fact that the ruling class and their satellites could and did employ existing conceptions of salvation to further their own power.

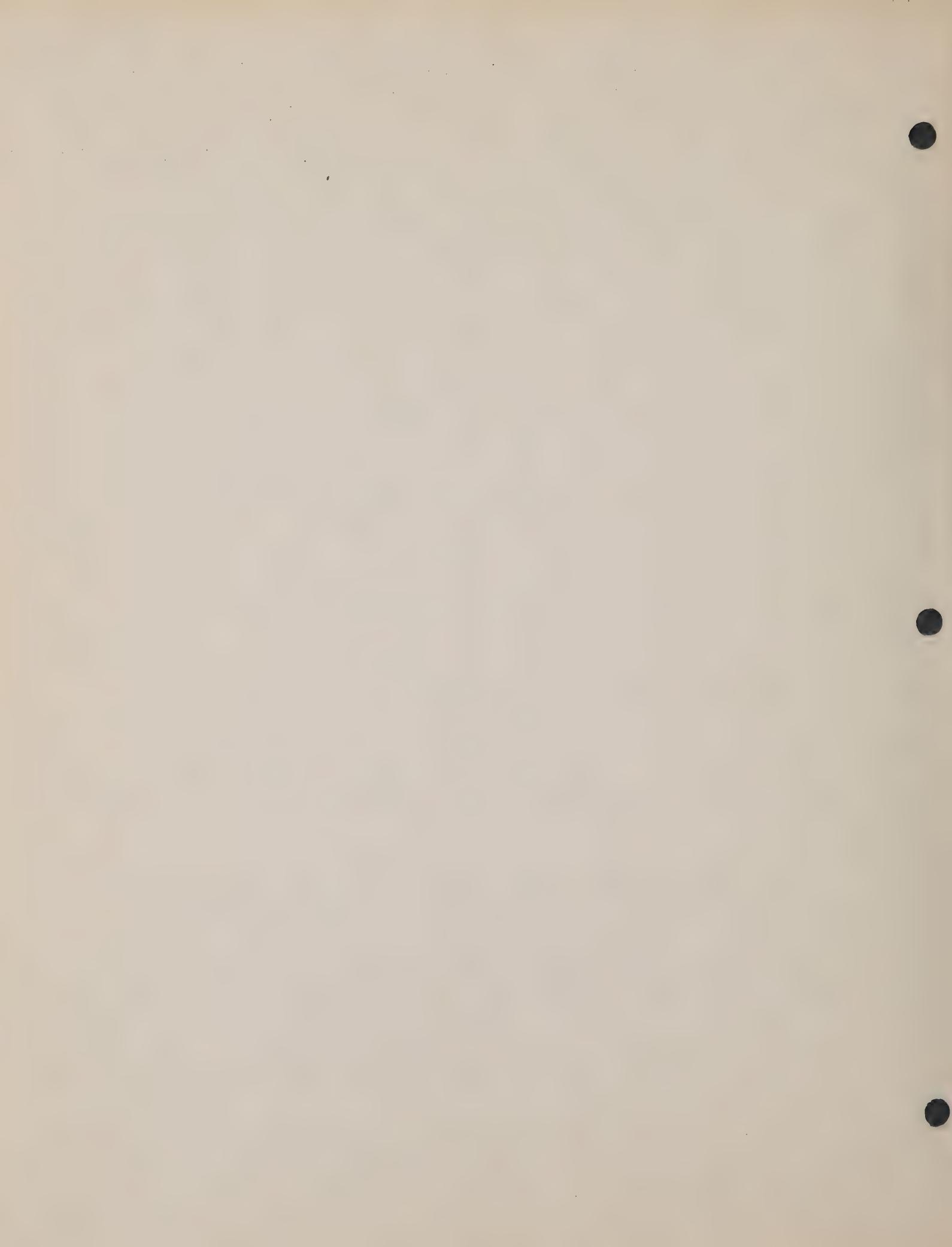
The primacy of the concept of salvation is the triad of concepts ~~which~~ with which soterics deals is reflected in the struggle of the Jewish people for survival. When as a result of emancipation and enlightenment the Jewish people began to disintegrate and Judaism to cease functioning, Reformism tried to check the disintegration of the Jewish people by reconstructing Judaism into a modern form of ethical monotheism. In its reconstruction of Judaism it has tried to convey the impression that the intrinsic truth of ethical monotheism is the sole raison d'etre of Jewish group life. By doing that, it practically departed from the natural primacy of the will to live the life abundant and assigned primacy to the concept of God. The price it paid for this mistake was to find Jewish life becoming emptied of all content and the concept of God nothing but an empty formula used in ritual, but lacking all concrete application to human life. It is against that mistake that the various nationalist movements in Jewry as well as Reconstructionism are reacting by placing the emphasis where it should be placed, namely, the creative survival of the Jewish people. It does not degrade a religion or render any the less universal, when we adapt it to the purpose of group survival any more than when we adapt it to the needs of survival of the individual. Actually to the extent that every individual is a member of a group, whenever we reckon with his needs we cannot avoid taking account in some way also of the needs of his group. But we are sure to be on terra firma when in dealing



with a religion professed by a distinctive group, be it nation or church, we reckon with that religion through the interests of that group, and try to adopt it to the most creative needs of that group.

Of course there is the danger of making group survival so much of an end in itself as to ride roughshod over the rights and interests of other groups. We do that whenever we interpret our religion in such a way as to further the national greed for power. This is what Fascism and Nazism have been doing. It is possible, however, to avert that danger without making of religion into a disembodied ideal. On the contrary, because of that very danger it is necessary to place all our emphasis upon the primacy of the particular type of salvation we want to adopt as our aim, in order to make sure that the salvation we seek calls for no one else's damnation. If there is to be universalism in a religion, it should find expression first and foremost in the conception of salvation. If, in other words, the group so conceives its own life and best interests in such a way that in furthering them it would also be furthering the life and interests of all other groups, then we have the ideal type of salvational concept. This gives point to what Ranke said: "The greatest good fortune which can happen to any men is to defend the common cause in their own cause."

This worldly salvation means much more than an "orderly and mechanized world without stress and friction." It calls for one in which the human being would attain "creativity, joyousness, cameraderie and warm human decency." That would be one in which the following conditions would obtain: 1) Joy in work and in the conditions of work; 2) joy in play and leisure; -- this implies a considerable measure of security; 3) mass artistic enjoyment, especially the development of a nation of amateurs in every field of art; 4) high-grade professional literary and artistic productions of individuals; 5) presence of wide individual



divergences within the culture, the freedom to follow up one's attitudes, the career open to talent; 6) the acceptance of minority groups and the encouragement of cultural autonomy and cultural divergences; 7) the social equality of the sexes; 8) the gentleness and care shown for children; 9) the sanctity and uncheapness of human life; 10) values set upon physical health and beauty; 11) the social conditions for mental health and the treatment of criminals; 12) the sense of collective unity and cohesiveness of striving; 13) the fundamental respect for science and rational thought. (This list is taken from It Is Later than You Think, by Max Lerner, Viking Press, pp.243-4).

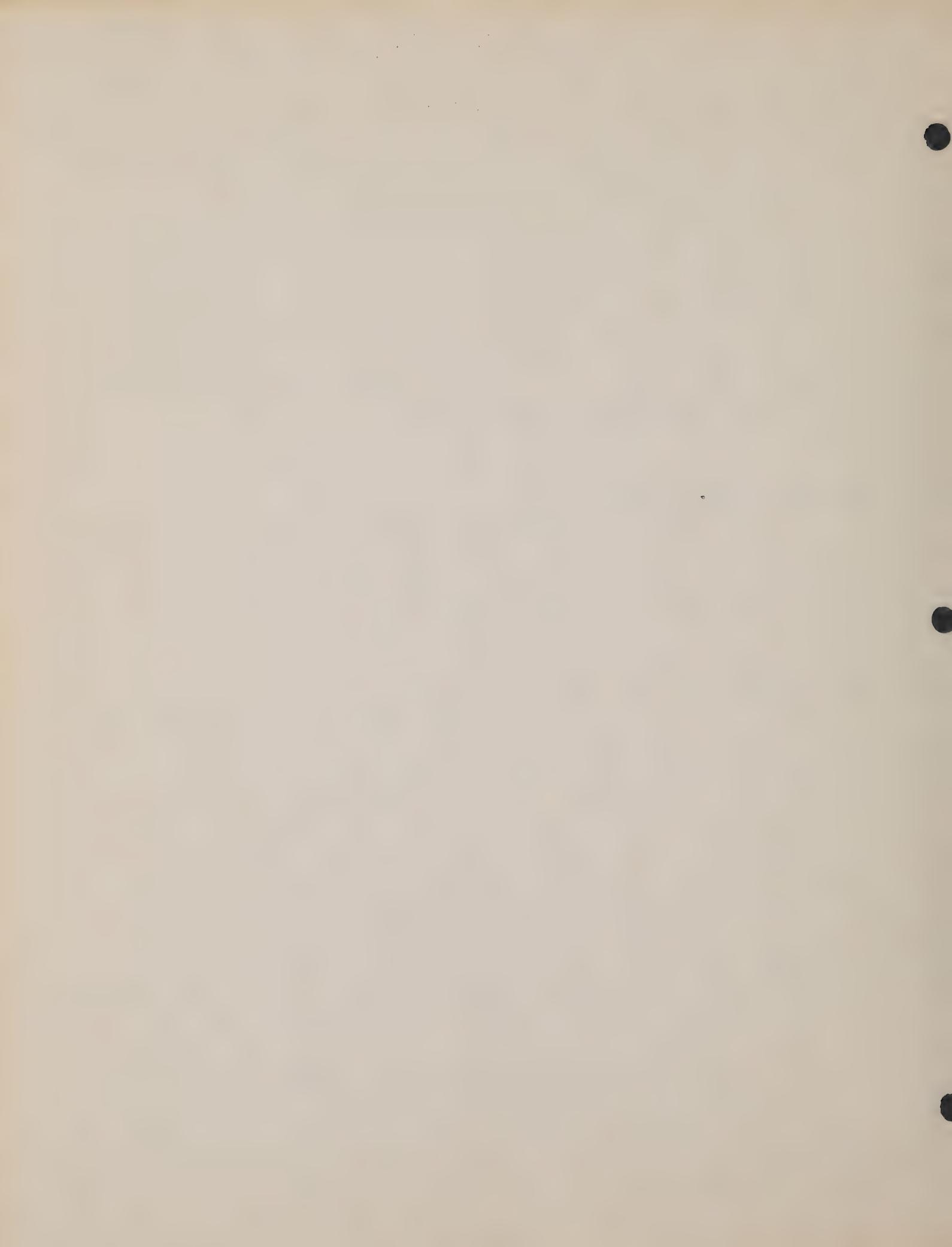
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Saturday, Sept. 7, 1940

War as the punishment for our sins of social injustice is not confined to the actual havoc and disaster that come upon nations when their armies and navies clash. It is such even in times of peace, for the threat of war distorts our entire peace psychology. The fear of war compels us to gear our economy to the preparation for it, the training of men and the making of armaments. What the capitalists begrudge the workers is taken away from those capitalists in the form of taxes to maintain armies and navies. The employment of men which might have been made possible by a more equitable distribution of income and of purchasing power is partly absorbed by the production of implements of destruction. The real danger is not in the armament race but in armament ~~war~~ economics. "Remove the pressure of armaments and you remove the underpinning of the economy and precipitate bankruptcy." On the other hand laying up armaments and preparing for war is itself a factor for bringing it on. Thus in the very process of our sinning we inevitably prepare the conditions for our punishment. It may be that the ancient intuitively sensed this truth, for what else could they have meant by designated sin as folly and the blackguard (p.258) as a fool.

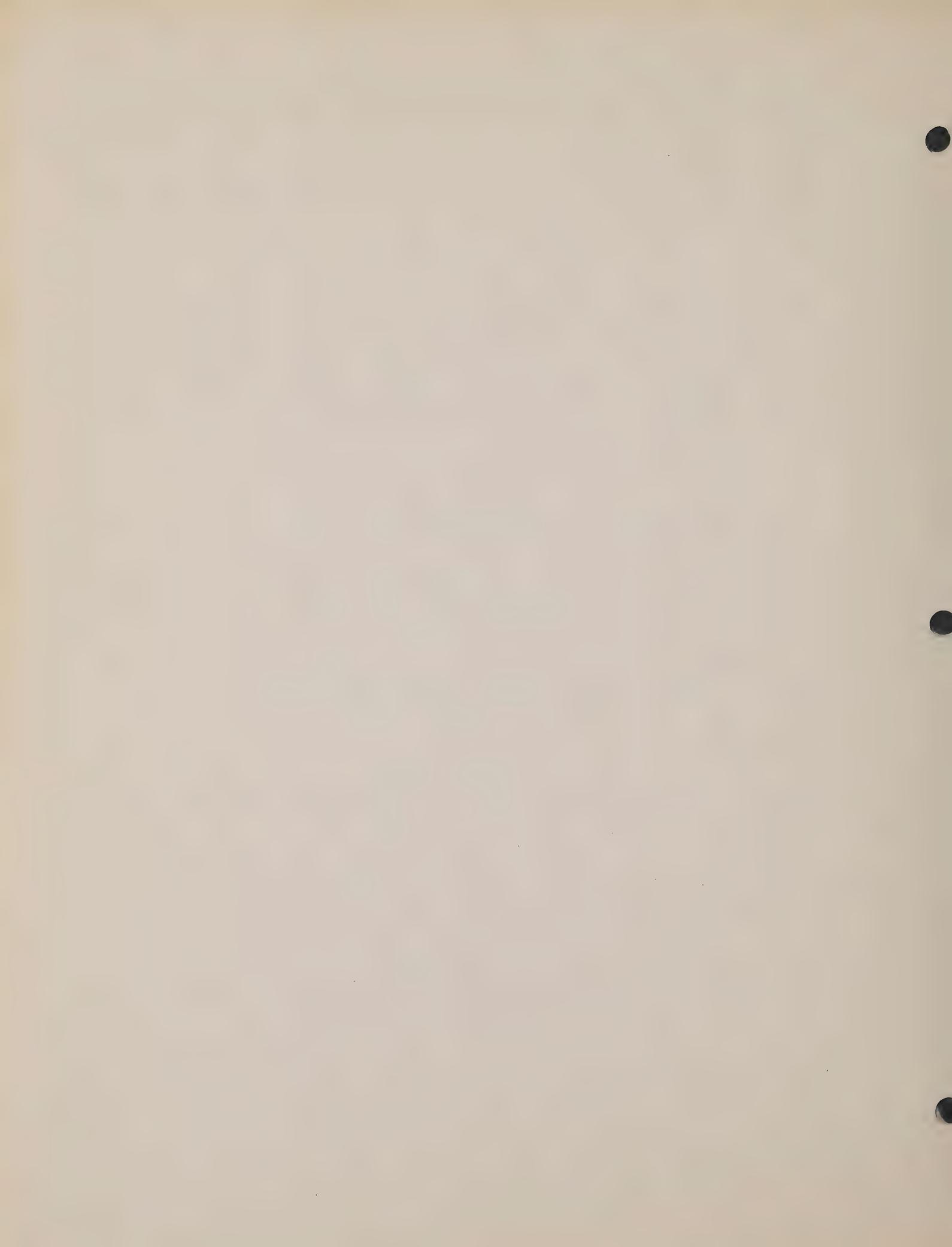


In soterics the element of process (= that which makes for salvation) would have to be studied under the categories of instinct, habit and reason, their interrelation and their distinctive attributes, viewed individually and socially. (According to Swift the human being is not homo rationalis but homo capax.)

Under the category of habit viewed socially, it is necessary to study the function of institutions and to arrive at some principle which would guide us when to uphold them and when to change them so that their weight will support us and not crush us. (Homiletically this might be read into the phrase (p.258)).

Much of the confusion with regard to humanism would be cleared up if those who discuss it would make clear whether their main interest is to interpret the Power in humanist terms or whether they are interested in interpreting salvation in terms of what we ordinarily speak of as human welfare instead of in terms of some transcendental concept. It is in the latter sense only that I would class myself as a humanist.

If it is true, as modern psychology maintains, that men are on the whole irrational, insecure, fear-ridden, hunger-driven, hatred-obsessed, animal-like, salvation ought to consist in such transformation of their thoughts, feelings and habits as would make them rational, secure fearless, self-controlled, dispassionate, human. But where are all these desirable traits to come? The answer must necessarily be that these desirable traits are at least as potentially present in human nature as the undesirable ones are actually present. By means of conditions both mental and social which are favorable to activation of the desirable traits, it is possible to bring about the transformation which is tantamount to salvation. Salvation is thus predicated on the assumption that



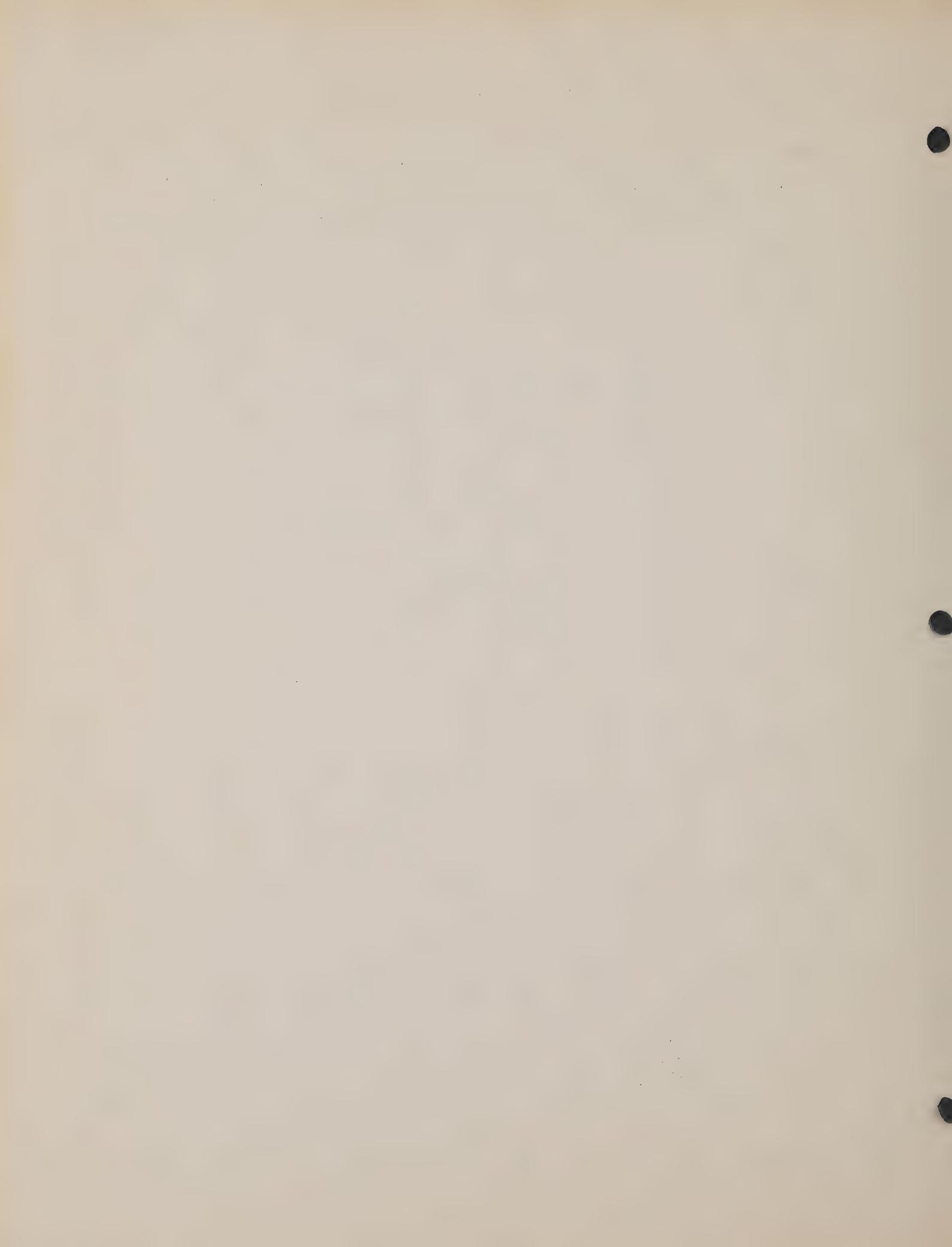
decency, fellowship and dignity are just as inherent/ as, even if less potent than, cruelty, canning and self-seeking lust for power.

When Men naturally find it easier to live on the level of the more powerful traits, the irrational and animal like. In the same way men find it easier to be governed than to govern themselves. If salvation is to consist in getting them to live on the level of the weaker but more desirable traits, or in enabling them to govern themselves, it will amount to getting human beings to do that which is harder for them. When we thus succeed in doing the harder rather than the easier thing, what really happens, is there a danger in the things or in us? The correct answer probably is that the change is in both. We become morally stronger and that which was hard becomes easier for us to do, whereas that which was easy becomes difficult. Thus we again arrive at the conclusion that salvation is not merely the transformation of the individual but also of society, not only of the will, but also of the social institutions through which the will functions.

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Sunday, September 8, 1940

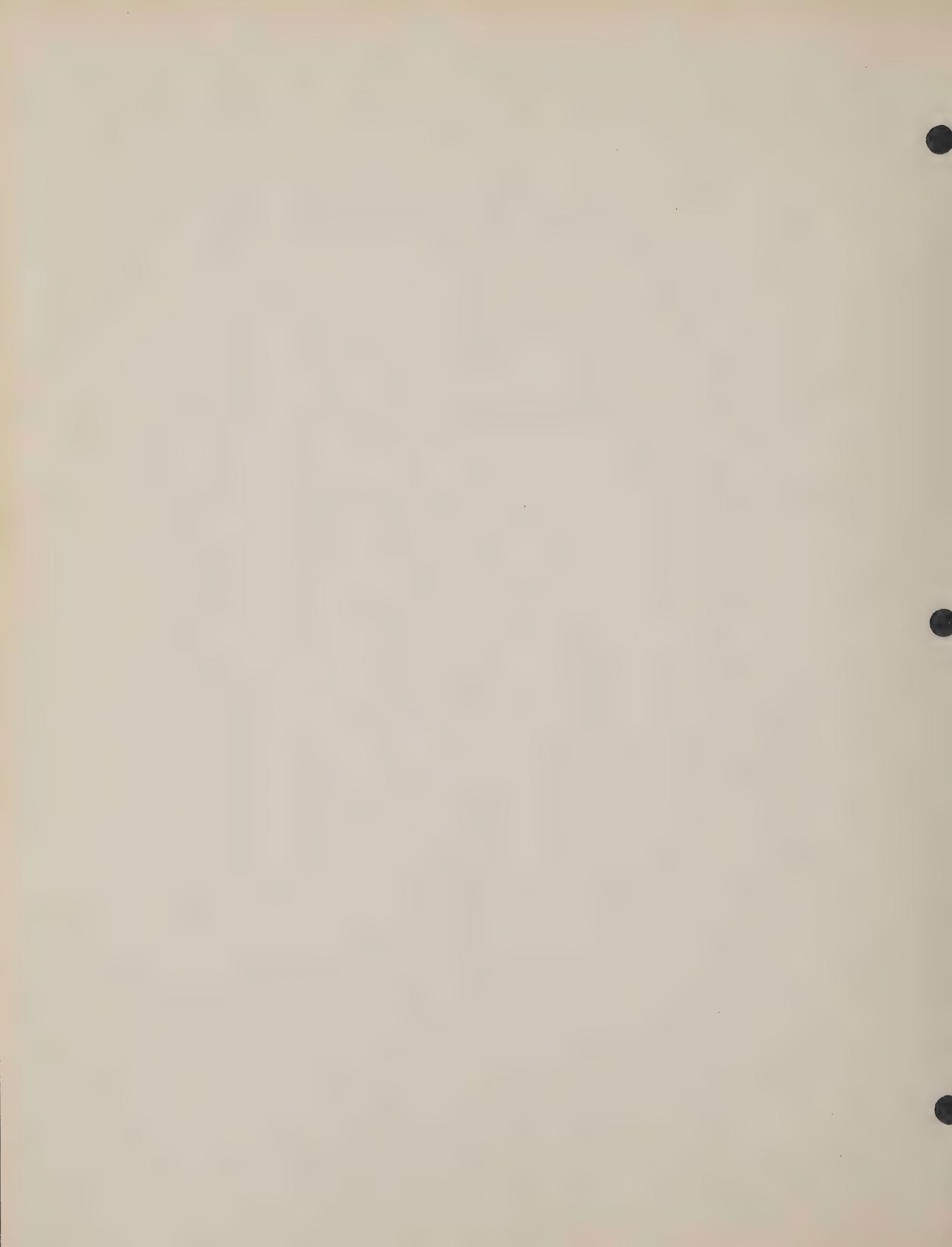
The mysticism which constitutes that part of soterics which deals with our experience of the Power that makes for salvation is not to be confused with the philosophical mysticism discussed by B. Russell in his essay on "Mysticism and Logic." Philosophical mysticism is another name for intuition as a source of knowledge of reality, in contrast to reason. B. Russell makes the following points: Reason is the only dependable source of reality in that it leads us to compare the testimony of one act of intuition with that of another such act and to arrive thus at objectivity. The unreliability of mysticism (or intuition) is shown by the fact that mysticism has maintained that division, plurality and time are illusory. Finally, mysticism or intuition, by viewing reality from the standpoint of its relation to good and evil, has been a hindrance



instead of an aid to our knowledge of reality. I shall not enter into the question whether this is a correct description of philosophical mysticism. For one thing, there must be a mistake in his description of that kind of mysticism. On the one hand he associates it entirely with Bergson's approach to reality and, on the other, he ascribes to it the negation of time. This certainly cannot be true of Bergson's approach. To Bergson time is of the very essence of reality, and the intuition of it does indeed reveal fundamental truths which escape the analytic approach.

But nothing of what Russell has to say about philosophical mysticism affects soteric mysticism. As indicated elsewhere the very purpose of soterics is not to study reality abstractly but entirely in relation to the maintenance and enhancement of human life or salvation. The mysticism or intuitional approach is limited entirely to the contemplation of one's own will to live as a human being. Such contemplation or introspection is not expected to reveal anything concerning the nature of absolute reality. It can only give us an immediate awareness of a Power not ourselves that makes for the realization of our will to live.

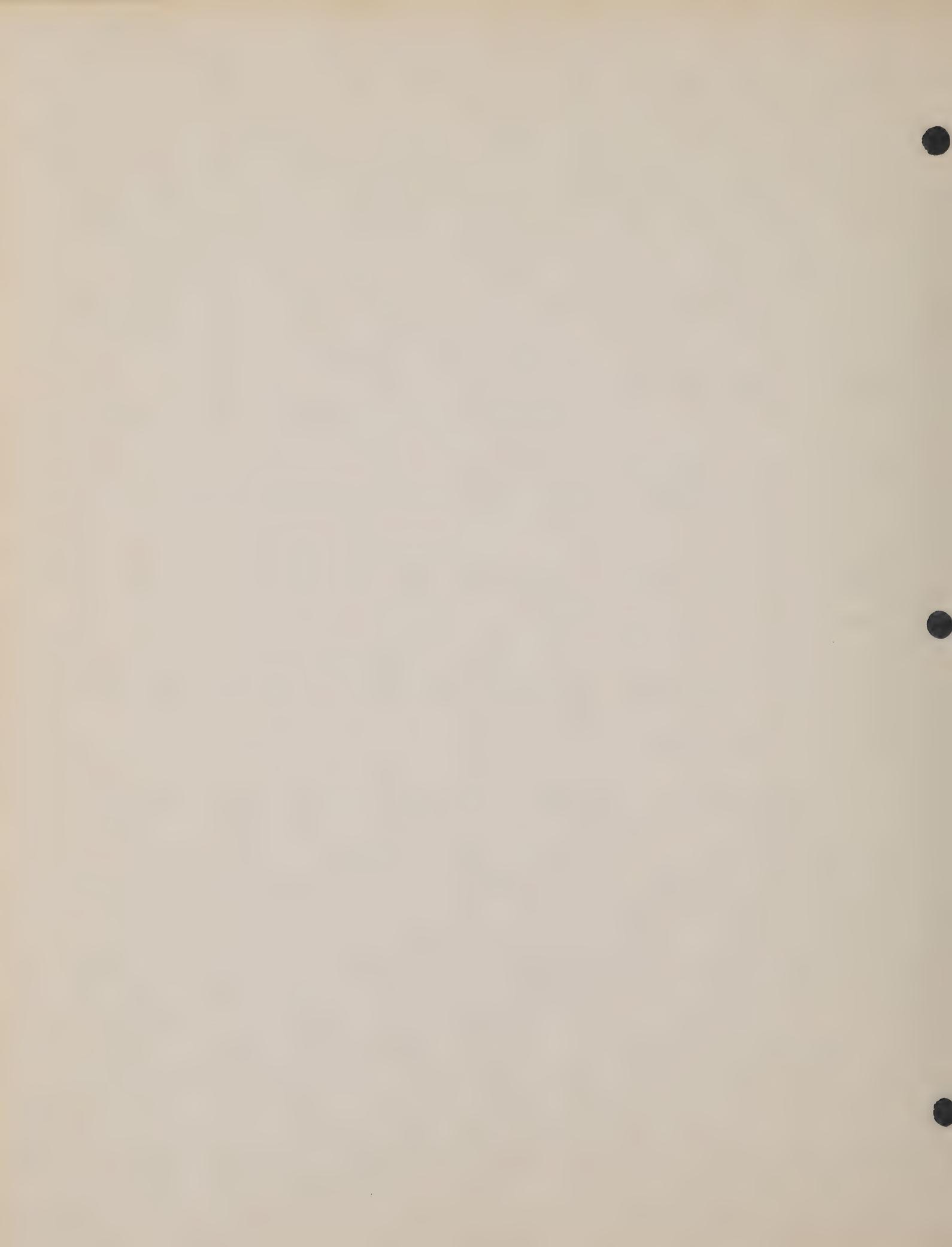
Unfortunately there has never been any clear recognition of the difference between philosophical and soteric mysticism. This is how B. Russell, in a discussion devoted to the unreliability of philosophical mysticism and a refutation of Bergson comes to mention Blake as a thinker in whom "a strong hostility to science co-exists with profound mystic insight." Blake as a religious personality could only have been interested in soterics and not in philosophical mysticism. Moreover, failing to realize the significance of the soteric function of religion Russell can permit himself to make the following sweeping characterization of the great religions of the world, which is entirely baseless: "In advocating the scientific restraint and balance, as against the self-assertion of a confident reliance upon intuition, we are only



urging, in the sphere of knowledge, that largeness of contemplation, that impersonal disinterestedness, and that freedom from practical pre-occupations which have been inculcated by all the great religions of the world." What he probably has in mind is the intellectual ascetic other-worldliness of a Platinus. But such a characterization scarcely applies even to Platinus. As far as the great religions in the world are concerned, nothing could be further from the truth than to represent them as inculcating freedom from practical preoccupation. Could anything be more practical than salvation?

The foregoing is not intended to negate Russell's main contention, namely, that philosophy to be of value should be conducted in a spirit of ethical neutrality, in the same way as any specific science. Soterics is not an attempt to impugn the value of modern science. But what it stresses is that ethics, religion and education cannot be studied or practiced in a spirit of ethical or religious neutrality. In dealing with the art of life it is necessary to reintegrate into an organic unity the results obtained by the various scientific and philosophic studies and by the various arts.

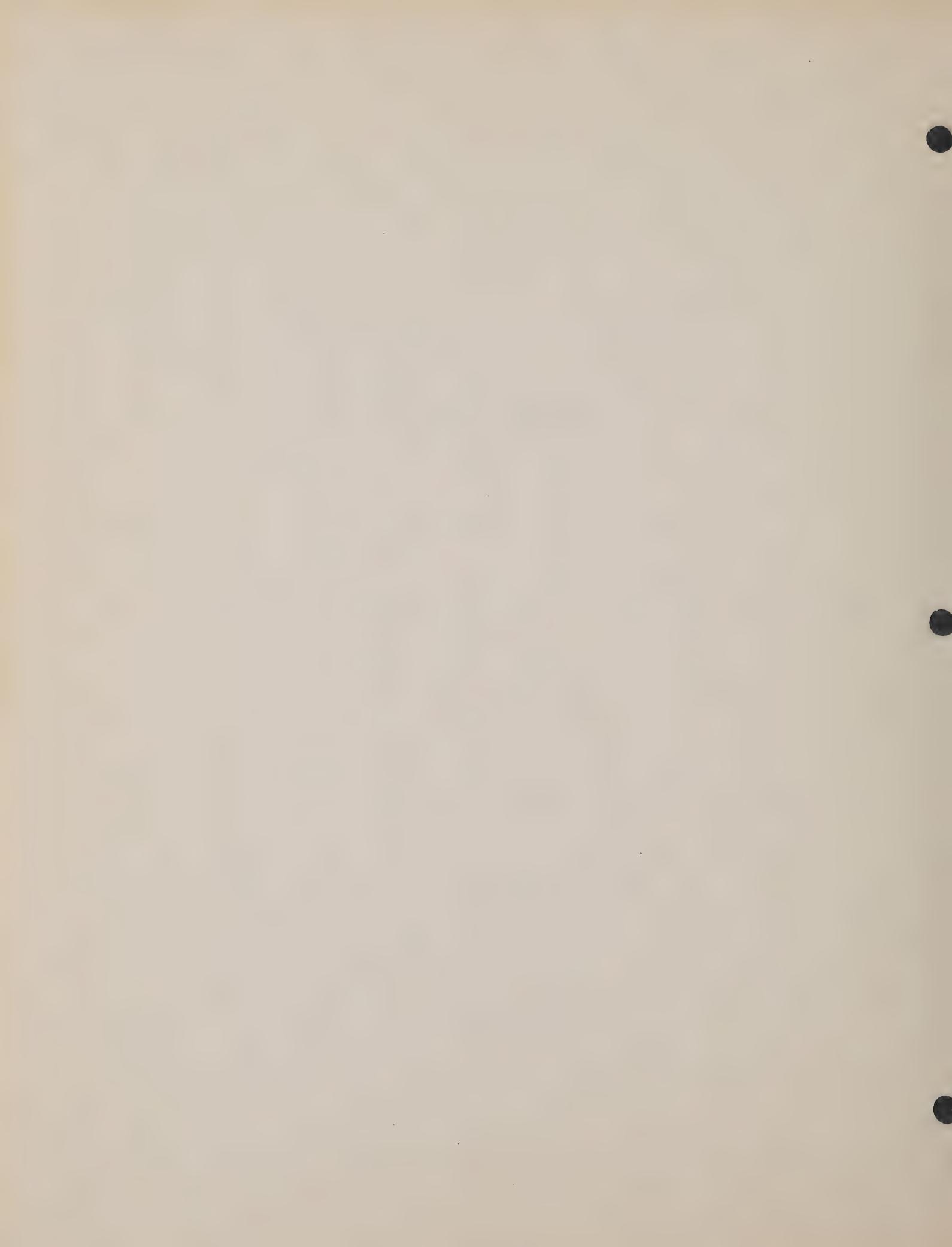
I can think of no better exposition of man's will to salvation or to such maximum life as only the human being can achieve than that deservedly famous essay by B. Russell, "A Free Man's Worship." Its main thesis is the very antithesis of what has been maintained in these pages. In it Russell seeks to set forth with all the charm of his magic prose what he regards as the inexorable conclusion of Science that the Power not ourselves is omnipotent but blind, alien, purposeless and devoid of meaning. Vis a vis that Power man's life is brief and powerless; "on him and all his race the slow, sure ~~dark~~ door falls pitiless and dark." But what he actually proves is perhaps something he did not intend: the strange and unaccountable will to live that is man, all the stranger



and the more unaccountable, the more aware we become of the common doom which must befall us. But most strange and unaccountable of all is the fact that it is not, as Russell depicts it, a mere will to live, to hurry through the years, to drown in a round of pleasures the consciousness of the end, but to live a most conscious, ascetic and self-sacrificing life. This is for him to make the most out of that momentary spark of awareness between two infinite darknesses. He would have us feel and "take into the inmost shrine of the soul the irresistible forces" death and change. He would have us lighten the sorrows of our fellowmen by the balm of sympathy, to give them affection, strengthen their failing courage and instil faith in them when they are in despair. All this and nothing less is what he asks of us.

Need we any better evidence of the imperious character of man's will to salvation than the fact that even when he comes to believe, however mistakenly, that the Power not ourselves is nothing more than "accidental collocation of atoms" that to such a Power he owes "his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs," and that the same Power will crush him with the indifference with which we crush the ants, we step on when walking -- despite all this, man is consumed with an eagerness to live and to make the most of life.

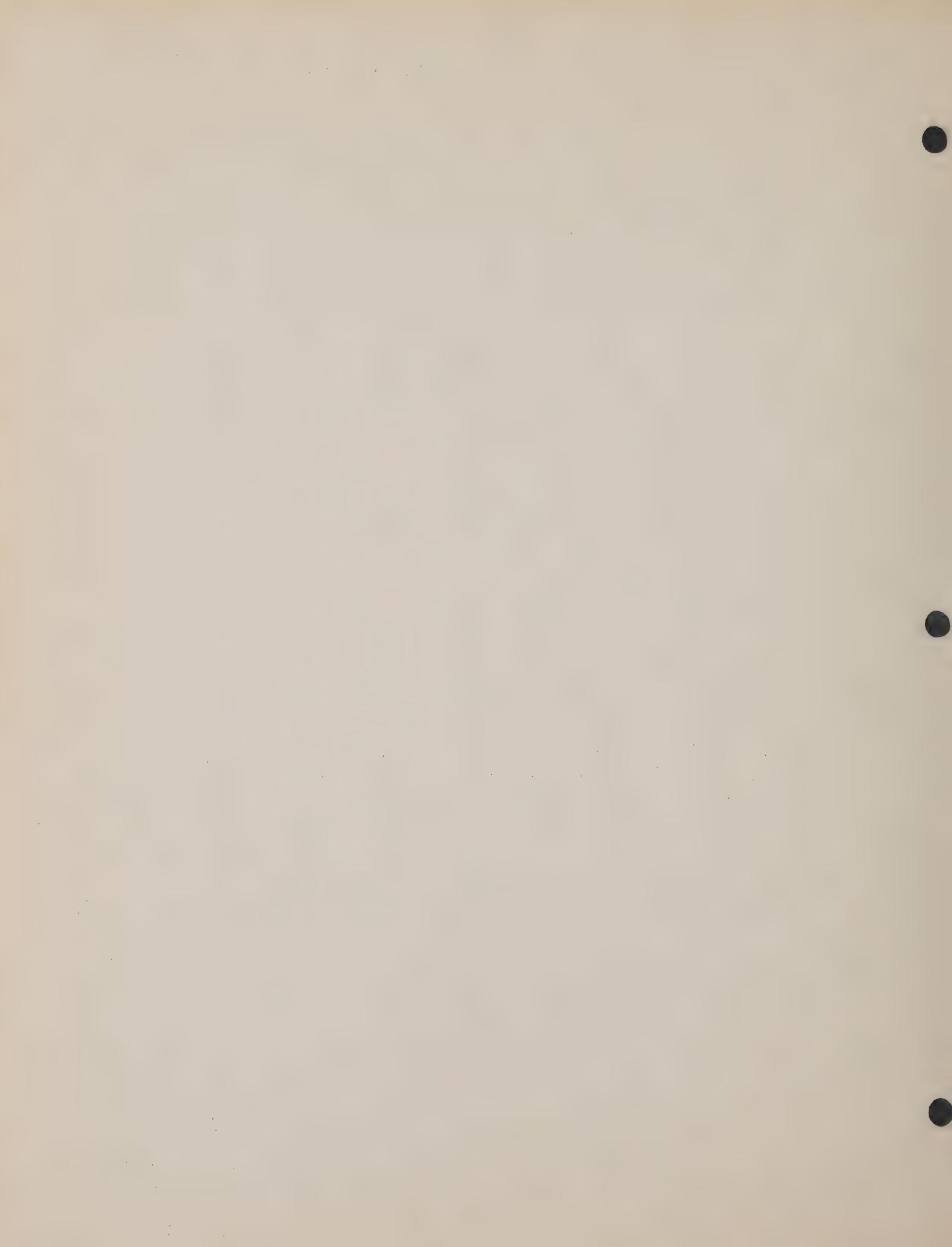
In the same way as the fact of the will to live is its own justification, so is the fact that man would be contented with nothing less than a life that finds expression in truth, goodness, beauty and worship its own justification. "Man was born," says Russell, "with the power of thought, the knowledge of good and evil, and the cruel thirst for worship." This means that man will first think, condemn evil and approve good and worship something or somebody and then explain why he does these things. Life consists in using whatever powers we are born with. One of those powers is reason and intelligence. It is reason when it tries to account for what is. It is intelligence when it tries to change



what is into what should be. It is that very power which compels us to perform that mental operation by which the mere will to live and make the most of life is expanded into the affirmation "There is a Power -- not ourselves -- that makes for salvation." We are more likely in the end to achieve salvation, if we become aware of our will to live the maximum life, in the expanded form of that affirmation and if we plan our life in accordance with that affirmation.

The study of soterics would clear the atmosphere for philosophy. So long as there was no special discipline dealing with the problem of human life as a whole, with such questions as that of life's purpose, meaning and self-fulfillment, all these questions naturally drifted into philosophy and vitiated its objective character. The reason they drifted into philosophy was that the answer to them was assumed to depend on the theory of being and of knowledge. On the other hand, the awareness that questions of such immediate vital import depended for their solution upon the theories of being and knowledge made the philosophers fearful lest they arrive at conclusions that might lead to conclusions dangerous to conduct. The result was that they permitted ethical considerations to influence their thinking about being and knowledge. "Ethical and religious motives," says Russell (*Mysticism and Logic*, p. 93) have been on the whole a hindrance to the progress of philosophy."

With the development of a distinct normative science like soterics where all that has a direct bearing on the maintenance and enhancement of human life is brought together in methodic fashion, and sufficient provision is made for the attainment of those ends, philosophers should feel much freer to pursue the study of being and knowledge uninfluenced by extraneous considerations. Spinoza's Ethics belongs by right to soterics and not to philosophy. Its very name would seem to confirm such a classification. All this is entirely in line with the following by



B. Russell: "The ethical work of Spinoza appears to me of the very highest significance, but what is valuable in such work is not any metaphysical theory as to the nature of the world to which it may give rise, nor indeed anything which may be proved or disproved by argument. What is valuable is the indication of some new way of feeling towards life and the world, some way of feeling by which our own existence can acquire more of the characteristics which we must deeply desire. The value of such work, however immeasurable it is, belongs with practice and not with theory." (Mysticism and Logic, p. 109.)

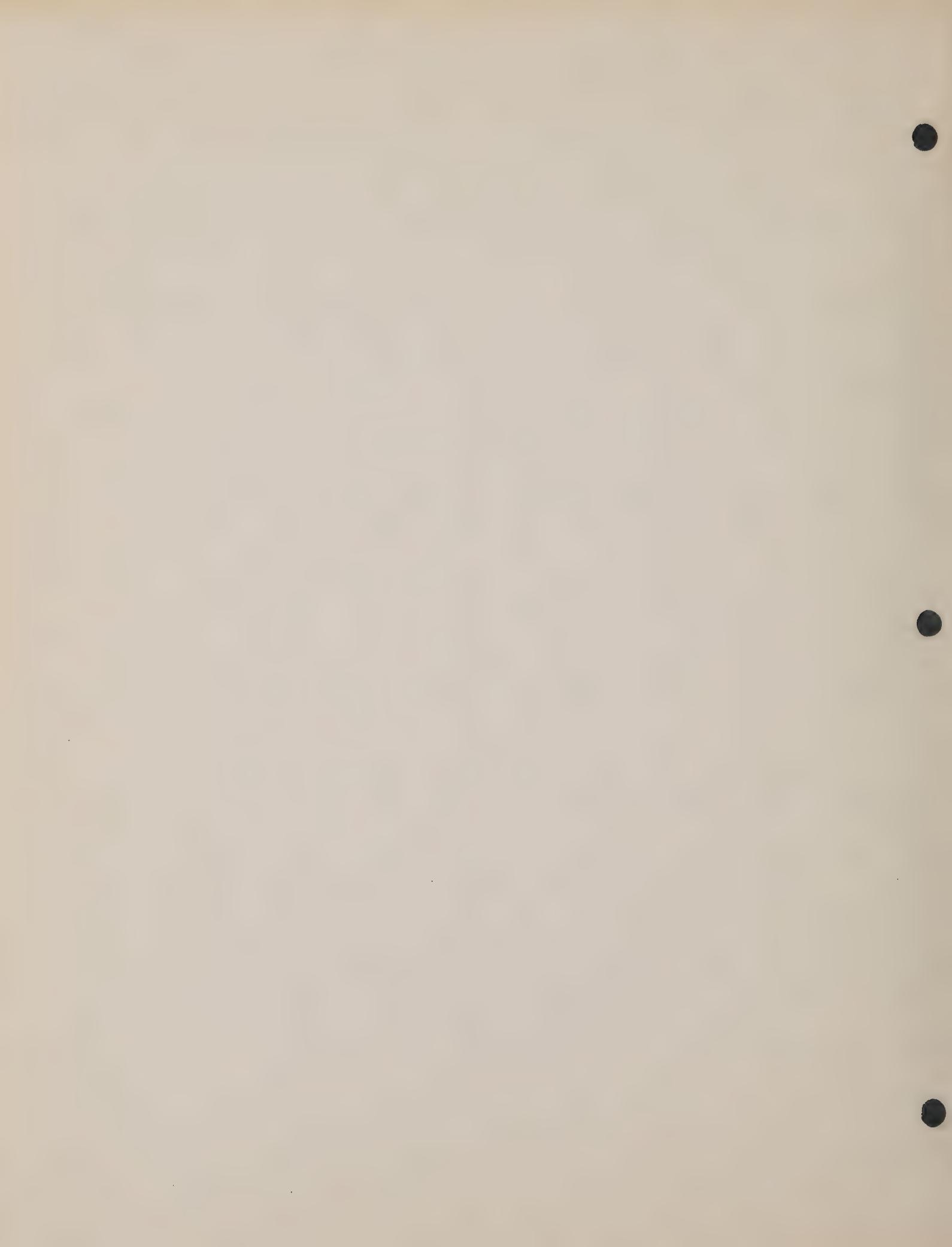
Only in Soterics could the notion of universe and the notion of good and evil find a legitimate place, whereas they are out of place in any philosophy which purports to study being and knowing ~~in~~ objective fashion. The notion of universe implies that all things that exist from a whole. Such a notion is evidently an a priori form which the mind imposes on reality and not derived empirically. But this does not mean that such a notion represents the inherent ontological character (so to speak) of knowing. What it actually means is that the human being, to make the most of his life finds it necessary to postulate a universe. It is mistake, therefore, as B. Russell points out (ibid. p. 00) for Bosanquet to assert (Logic, II p. 211) that "Reality is not merely one and self-consistent, but is a system of reciprocally determinate parts."
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The same is true of the notion of good and evil. If ~~xx~~ were recognized once and for all that from a metaphysical viewpoint there can be no meaning to either category, we should be in a better position to arrive at a plausible solution of the problem they present from a religious and ethical point of view.

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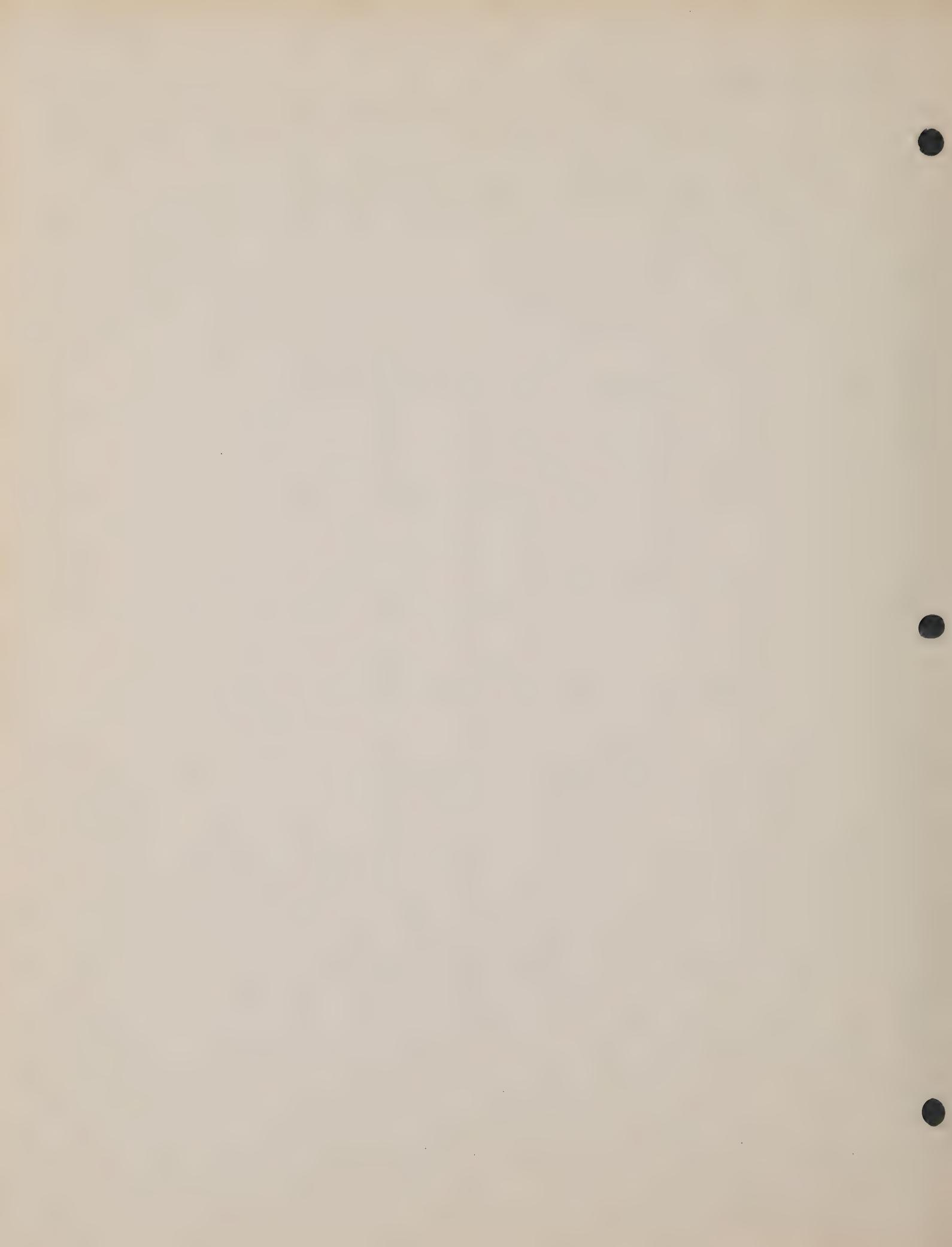
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Monday, September 10, 1940

The attempt to formulate a system of soterics is analogous to that of ~~Athenian~~ Socrates when he found that Athenian society was disintegrating under the impact of the new ideas popularized in his day by the Sophists. He sought to develop an ethical and synthetic approach to the problem of human life to counter the effects of the scientific and analytic approach. He probably would have preferred to confine his ethical thinking to the problem of human life. But unfortunately Plato came along and identified once again the problem of happiness or self-realization with the problem of being and knowing. The result was that both have become so badly entangled that it will be a long time before we learn to keep the two methodologies apart. Today as then the problem for which a solution is so crucially urgent, whether for politics (in the Aristotelian sense) or education is that of finding a pattern of individual and social living rather than a metaphysical theory of being or knowing.

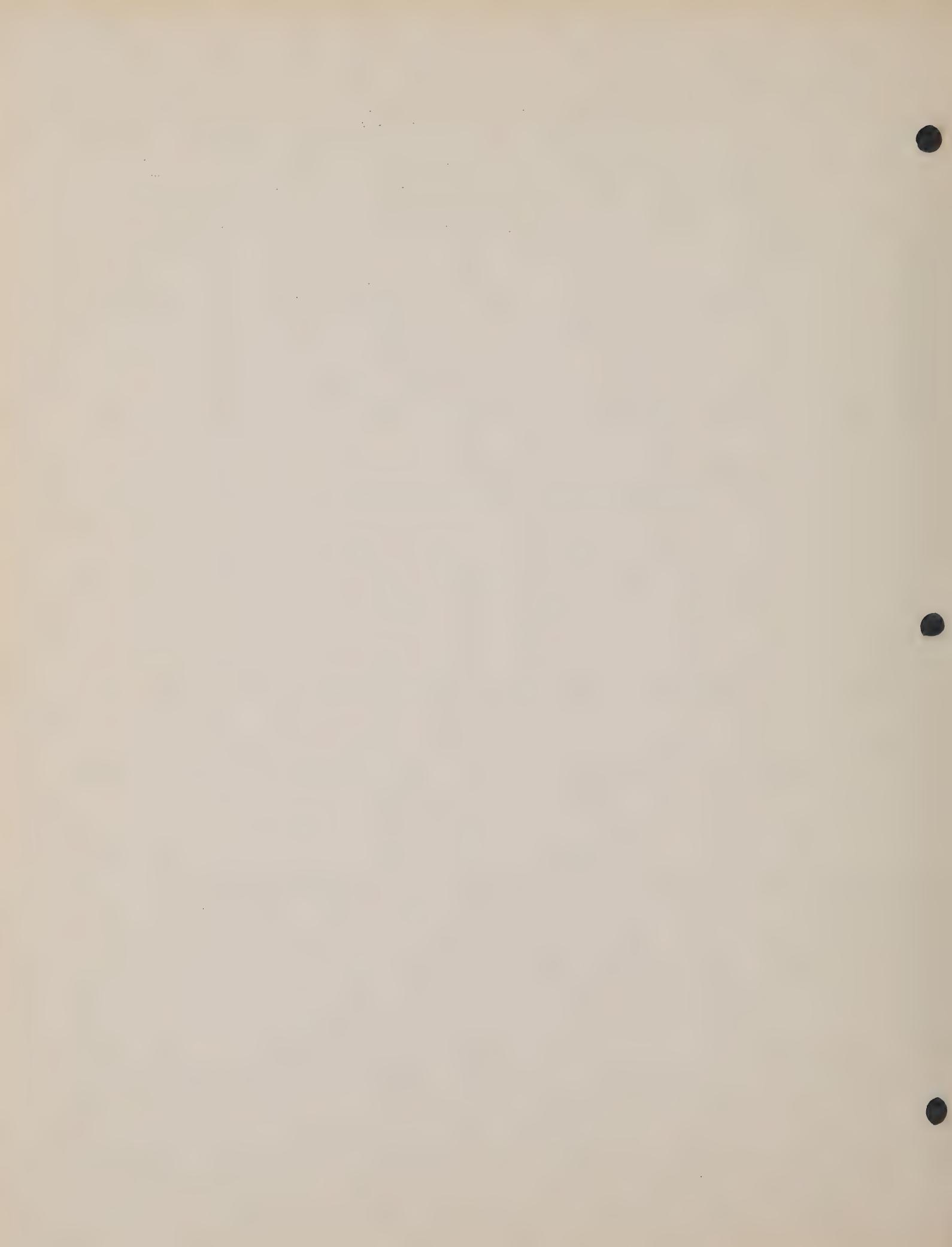
In formulating the conception of salvation we come up against the question: Whose salvation? That of the individual, the community, the nation or the human species? Perhaps it is just at this point that it is most important to turn to the concept of the Power that makes for salvation to find the answer. If we are to regard salvation as the objective of a Power not ourselves, it is inconceivable that it should be confined to our community or nation, and certainly the height of absurdity to regard ourselves as individuals of sufficient importance to constitute the embodiment of that objective. In the past each nation found it altogether natural to regard itself the purpose of creation and the sole object of the salvation making process. That was possible because of the limited knowledge of reality and of the inner life of the rest of mankind. Today it is only the combination of abnormal circumstances that brought about the pathological state of the German mind in which its world



hegemony is accepted as the purpose of world history. But ordinarily it will no longer be possible for anyone in his senses to conceive salvation in any other terms than those of the human species as a whole. Only universal salvation can henceforth be regarded as compatible with the belief in a Power not ourselves making for salvation.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the conception of salvation as being coextensive with the human species as a whole is more calculated to give play to human individuality and therefore to salvation in terms of the individual than salvation conceived as limited to one's nation. When identification with one's nation constitutes the limit of one's social and spiritual horizon and the confines within which one must achieve self-realization, the natural tendency is to insist upon absolute conformity to the established norms as the price for such self-realization. Any departure from them, or attempt to subordinate the interests of the nation to those of mankind as a whole is regarded as militating against its welfare. Thus it is only by adopting the conception of salvation as the universal prerogative of the human species that the individual is in a position to develop those traits and attitudes and world outlook which would elicit his maximum individuality at the same time that they would sublimate in him all traces of egoism.

One of the preconceptions which stands in the way of arriving at a solution of the problem of the relation of salvation to absolute reality is that absolute reality must be regarded as one. It is generally assumed that all of reality must necessarily fall into a monistic scheme, or it is entirely misapprehended. There can be, so it is thought, only one universe or none. By developing the soterical approach to reality in contrast with the scientific we shall accustom ourselves to thinking of reality in terms of at least two universes, both of which are equally true and real from their point of view. From a scientific standpoint it is not even necessary to think of reality as a universe. It may be



viewed outright as a multiverse. Soterically we must think of reality as a universe with man at the center and God as circumambient. This anthropocentric universe is in its way just as real as the scientific reality we arrive at through the process of abstraction and analysis.

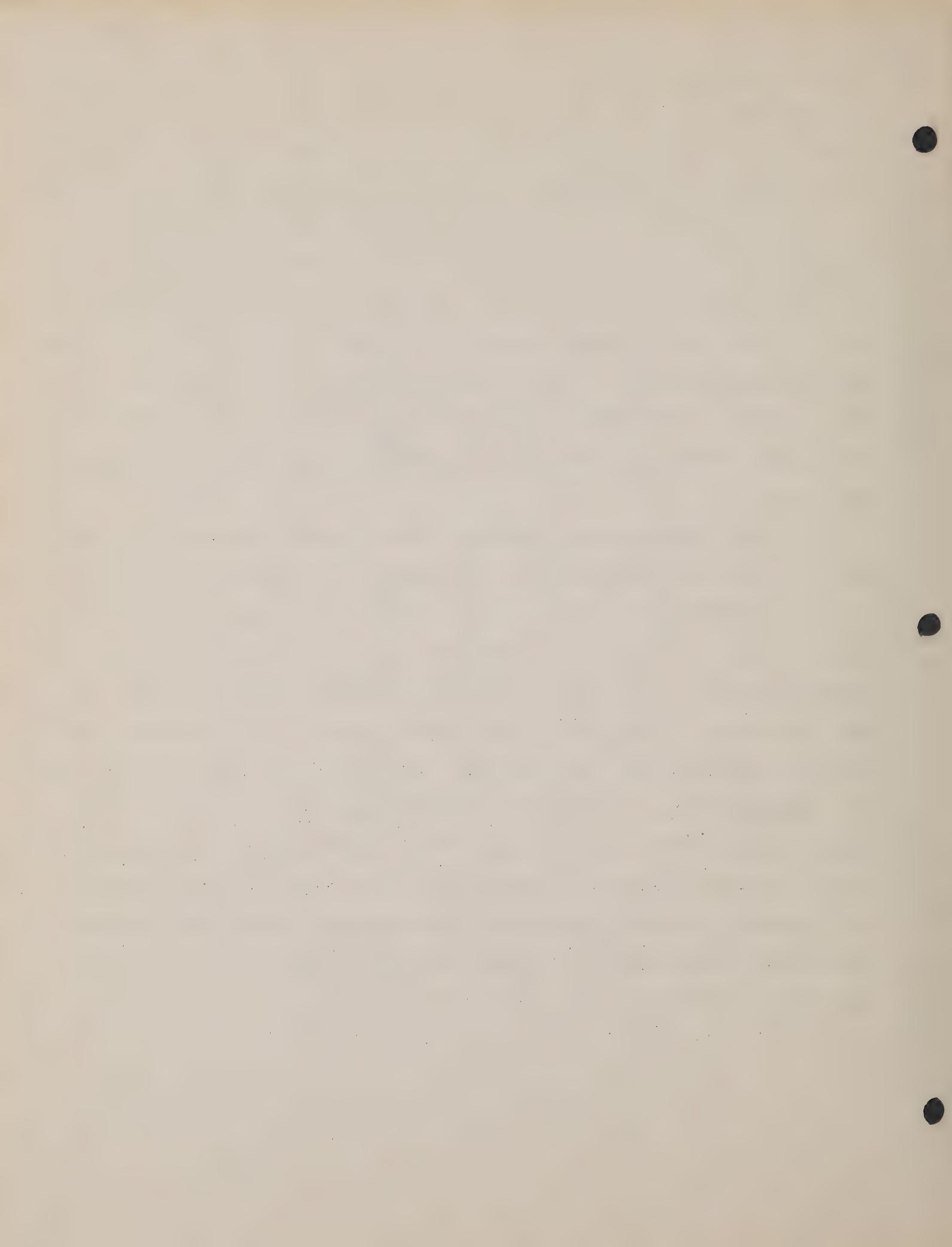
It is as futile to seek God or meaning as it is to seek man or human values in reality viewed scientifically. Man viewed scientifically is nothing more than a chance concurrence of atoms, of infinitesimally small proportions in comparison with the rest of existing mass and energy. The only place in which we can speak of God, good and evil, man, nature, ~~cosmos~~ is in reality viewed soterically, where all these things form are as real as the joy and agony which ~~form~~ the web and woof of man's existence.

Wells' "God the Invisible King" is a striking formulation of God as the Power -- not ourselves -- that makes for salvation. There can be no finer description of salvation than the following: "It is the conquest of death; first the overcoming of death in the individual by the incorporation of the motives of his life into an undying purpose, and then the defeat of that death that seems to threaten our species upon a cooling planet beneath a cooling sun. God fights against death in every form, against the great death of the race, against the petty death of indolence, insufficiency, baseness, misconception and perversion...this is the purpose to which He calls us out of the animal's round of eating, drinking, lustng, quarrelling and laughing and weeping, fearing and failing and presently wearying and dying, which is the whole life that living without God can give us." (p. 99)

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Wednesday, September 11, 1940

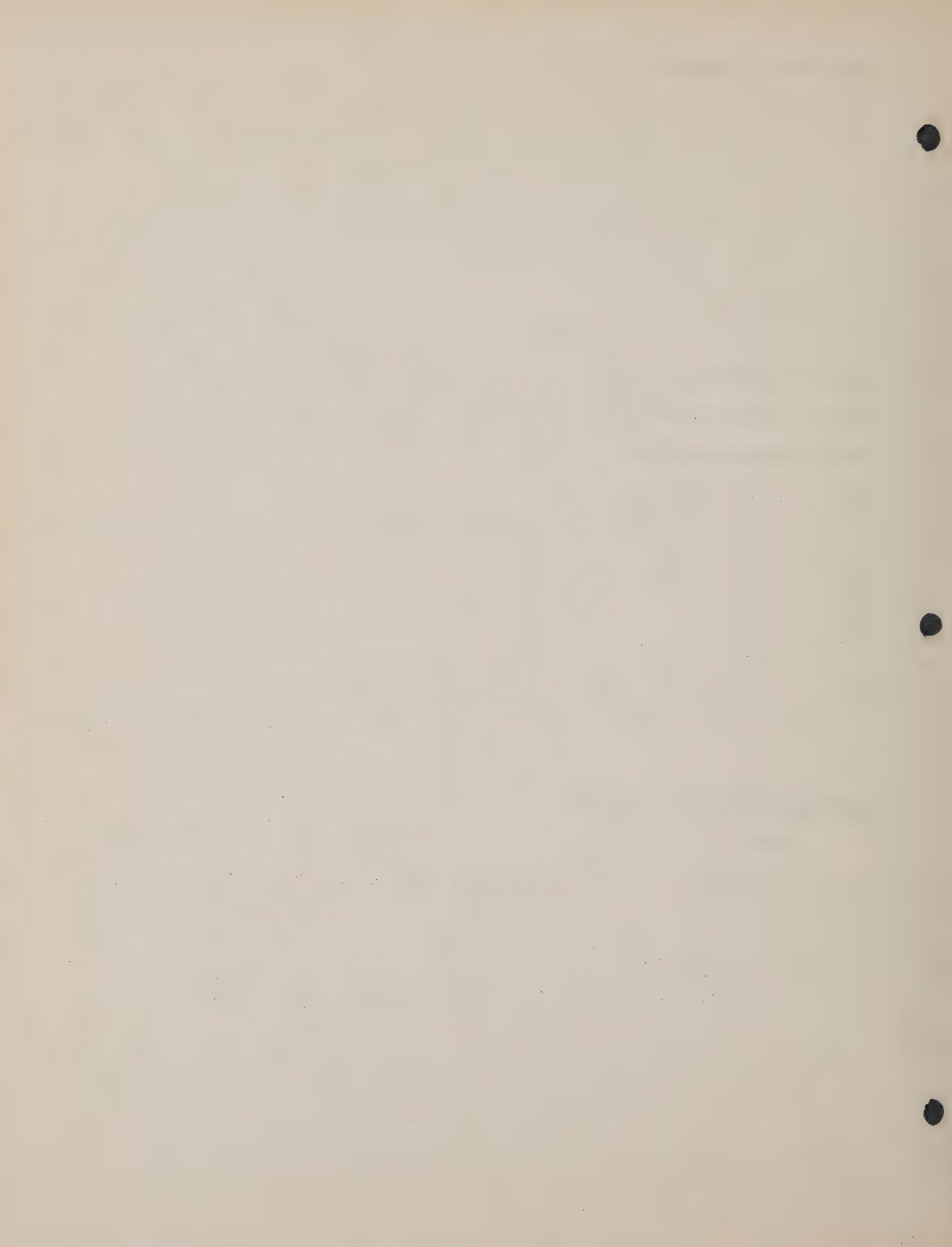
I find it necessary to correct a fundamental mistake in what I said in one or more of the preceding entries concerning the modern conception of salvation, not as a static achievement but as maximum growth (or creativity) in faith, in wisdom and in democracy. This should be the aim of our social institutions viz: political, economic and educational. In education society has most occasion to deal with the soterical process as a whole. It would therefore be best to use education as illustrative of the process from the standpoint of means. Education is professedly a means to the salvation of the child. By studying that avowed aim of education we shall have occasion to learn the nature of the conditions that make for salvation.

It is to provide the conditions to salvation that we should conceive of the educational process as consisting of the following: (which I have outlined in my course on the principles of education in the Hebrew University) 1. Physical and mental health; 2. functional activity (vocation); 3. normal sex relationships; 4. normal social relationships; 5. normal cosmic orientation; 6. normal channelling of excess function.

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Tuesday, September 17, 1940

When the Congress on Education for Democracy took place last year at Columbia, I heard people say that it was organized by Dean Russell of Teachers College in order that he might be first in line for the presidency of Columbia when Butler would retire or die. I suspect that some such motive must have led Finkelstein to begin about a year ago to organize the Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion which took place at the Seminary last week. In the conversation he had with me on Sept. 7, 1939 he intimated that he was planning to arrange a meeting to consider the problem of religion and democracy and that he would want me to take part in it. That was the last I heard about the conference.

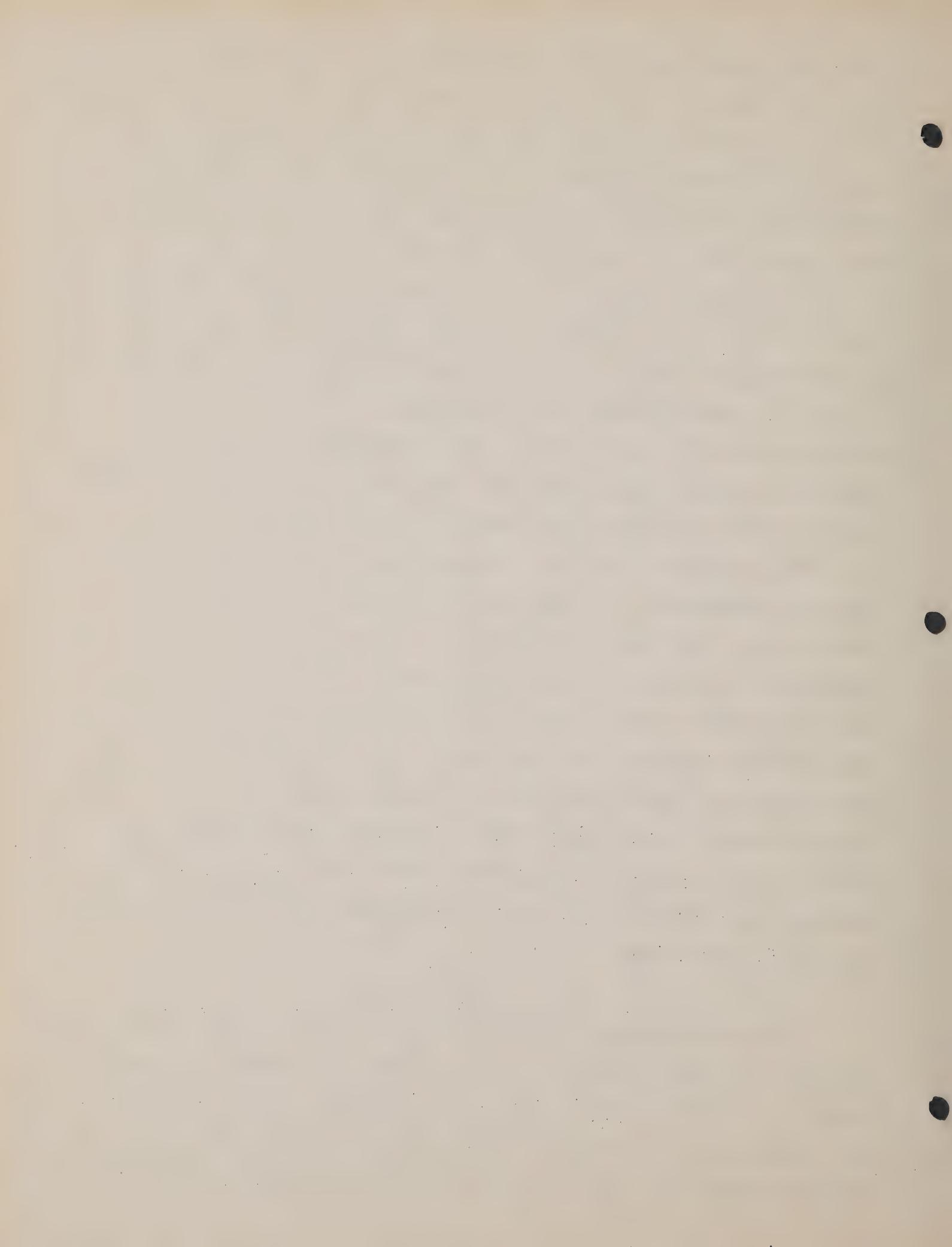


until late in the spring when the notices about its taking place were sent out. Apparently that conference was an additional means employed by F. to make sure of his getting the presidency. In his talk at Detroit at the Rabbinical Assembly Convention he played it up as the most significant effort in which the Seminary is engaged, and for the sake of which it deserved the support for which he appealed.

I did not even get a delegate's card of admission to the conference, but only a participant's. I would not have been permitted to sit in the front part of the tent where the conference took place, if it were not for the superintendent of the Seminary building who showed more consideration than F. and directed me to the section reserved for the delegates, where I could easily see and hear the speakers. I attended the day session on Tuesday and Wednesday of last week.

The organization of the conference was a true reflection of the perverted character of F. The views represented were mainly those of the Catholics, the Protestants and the physicists plus a superanimated biologist. The Catholic view was represented by Jesuits and priests and the Jew Mortimer Adler and that of the Protestants by some of their professional theologians. The discussion was very unsatisfactory. But what shocked our people was that no attempt was made to present the Jewish point of view. It all looked like a deliberate effort to give the Catholics first right of way, and to stress the need of a return to medievalism. Certainly the cause of democracy benefited nothing from the entire conference.

The only papers which had anything relevant to the problem of democracy were those of Edwin E. Aubrey, Robert M. MacIver and Harold D. Lasswell. Sorokin ranted and Maritain finessed. Mortimer J. Adler's was the incarnation of arrogance. Phillip Frank gave a Viennese version of Dewey's pragmatism. Johnson preached, and Pegis rehashed the stock argu-



ment of Catholicism that the only thinker who thought straight was Thomas Aquinas. Neither any one before him nor any one after him knew what he was talking about.

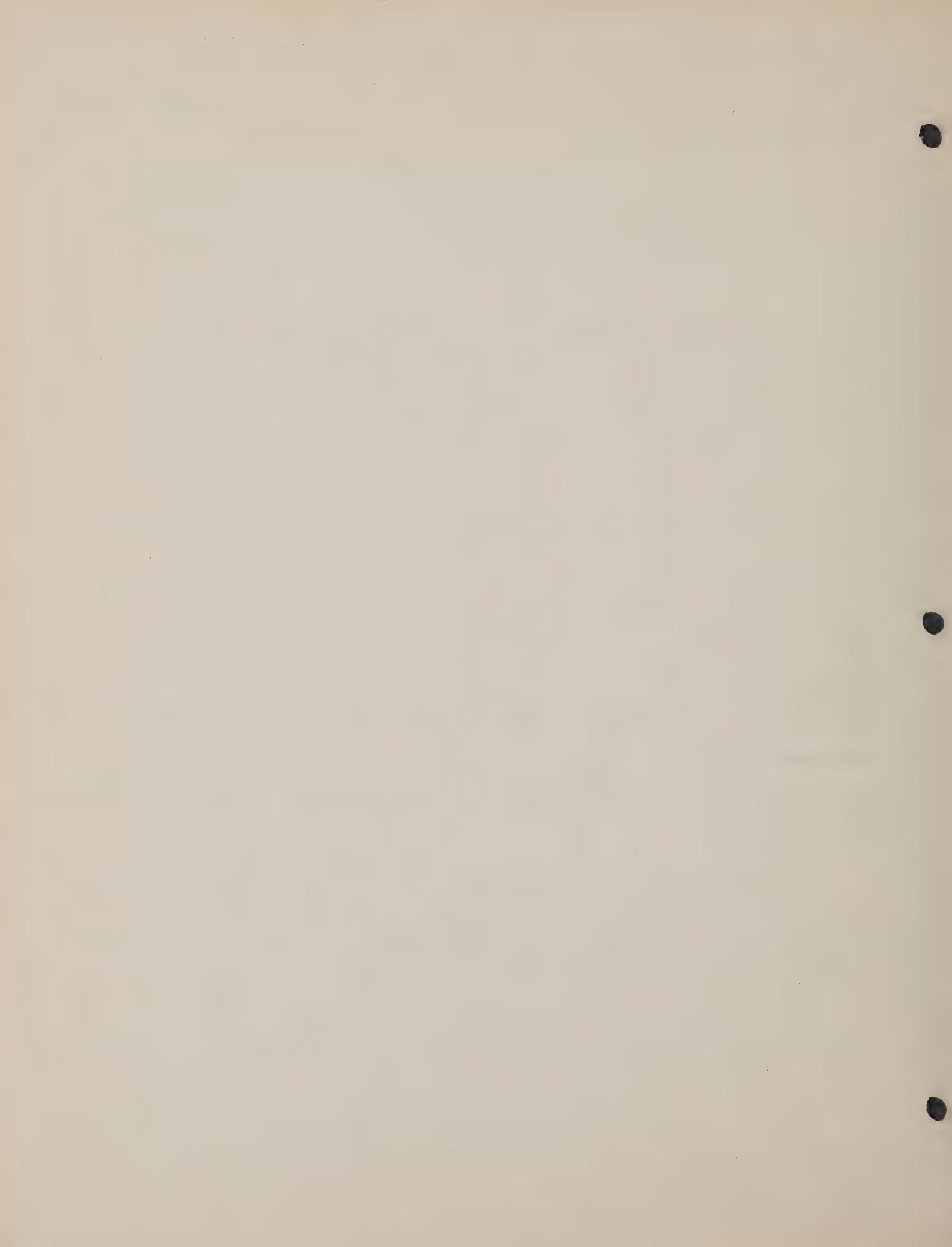
Last Friday morning (Sept. 13) at 8:10 Selma gave birth to a son. May he be a source of happiness to his parents.

Last Friday after the meeting of the TI Faculty I spoke to Scharfstein and Dinin about their inability to work together on the project of the Demonstration School of the TI. The result was that Dinin got into a huff and refused to have anything further to do with the school. He then telephoned to Dushkin to that effect.

Sunday morning Dushkin came to see me about Dinin's resignation. He suggested a way out of the impasse. Dinin is to be in sole charge of the work at the West Side School (this is to be the name of the Demonstration school) and Scharfstein is to supervise the work of the several teachers who would be asked to help a number of our pupils with their practice teaching. I came with that proposition to Dinin and Scharfstein at the conference which I had with them yesterday morning, and I succeeded in making peace with them and getting Dinin to withdraw his resignation.

Yesterday afternoon I met with the Editorial Board of the Reconstructionist. I refrained from ~~xxxxx~~ launching into lamentations and diatribes on the failure of both the special conference and the Institute which had been arranged for the week before last. Steinberg who was the chief culprit did not say a word in explanation of his failure to cooperate.

Last night the trustees of the Reconstructionist Foundation met. I am learning to control my temper. This is the only thing that I see happening at those meetings.



This morning I met the students of the Seminary and discussed with them the sermons for the High Holidays. The attendance was good and the session satisfactory. I shall continue meeting them the rest of the week.

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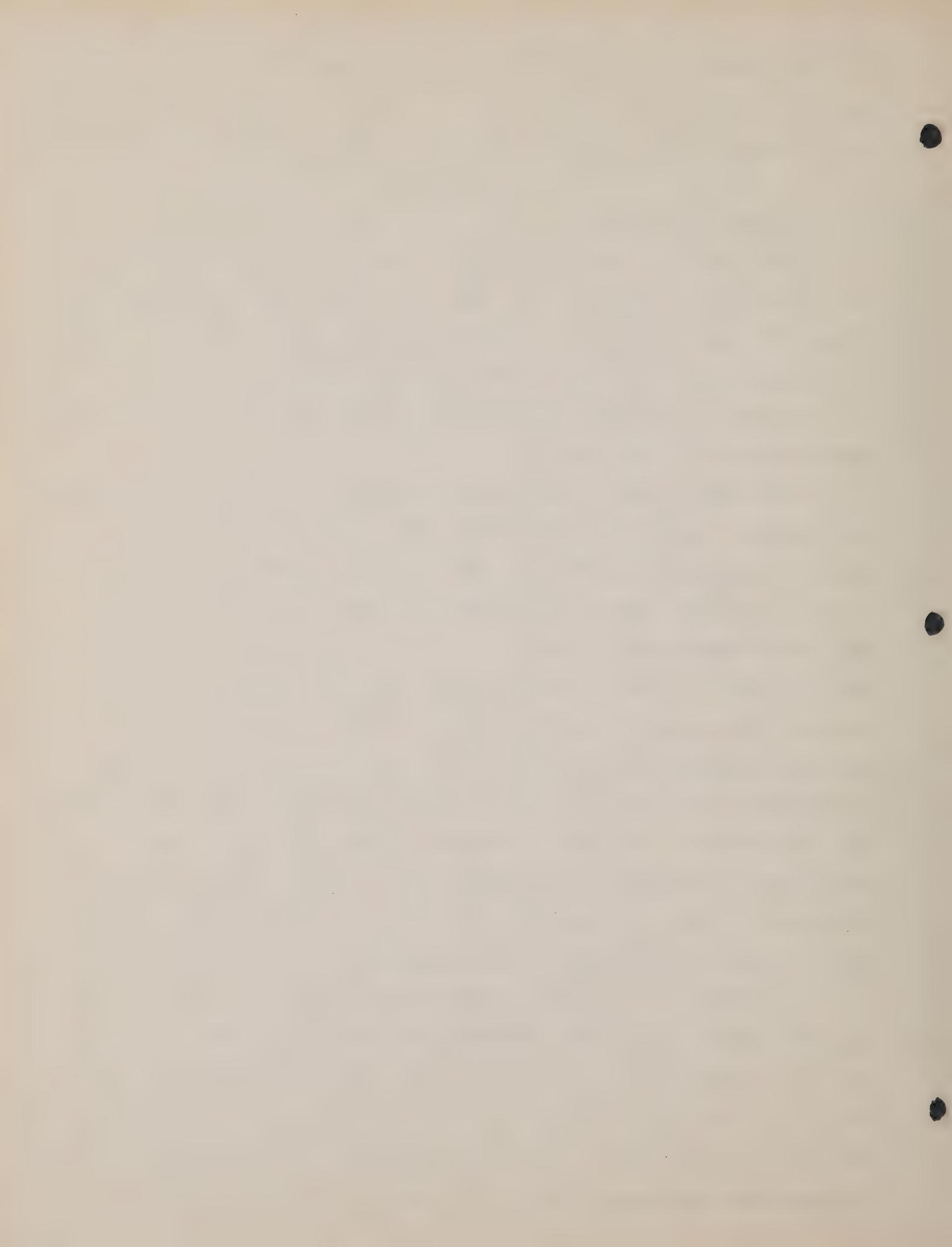
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Saturday, Sept. 21, 1940

I pray for one thing that is not within my control and for two
that are within my control. The ~~many~~ ^{one} thing is energy of body and mind
to work fast and long; the two things are that I say or do nothing that
I afterwards regret and that no day be frittered away in futile fussing.

My first prayer has been granted me these days. Not entirely the
two other things I pray for.

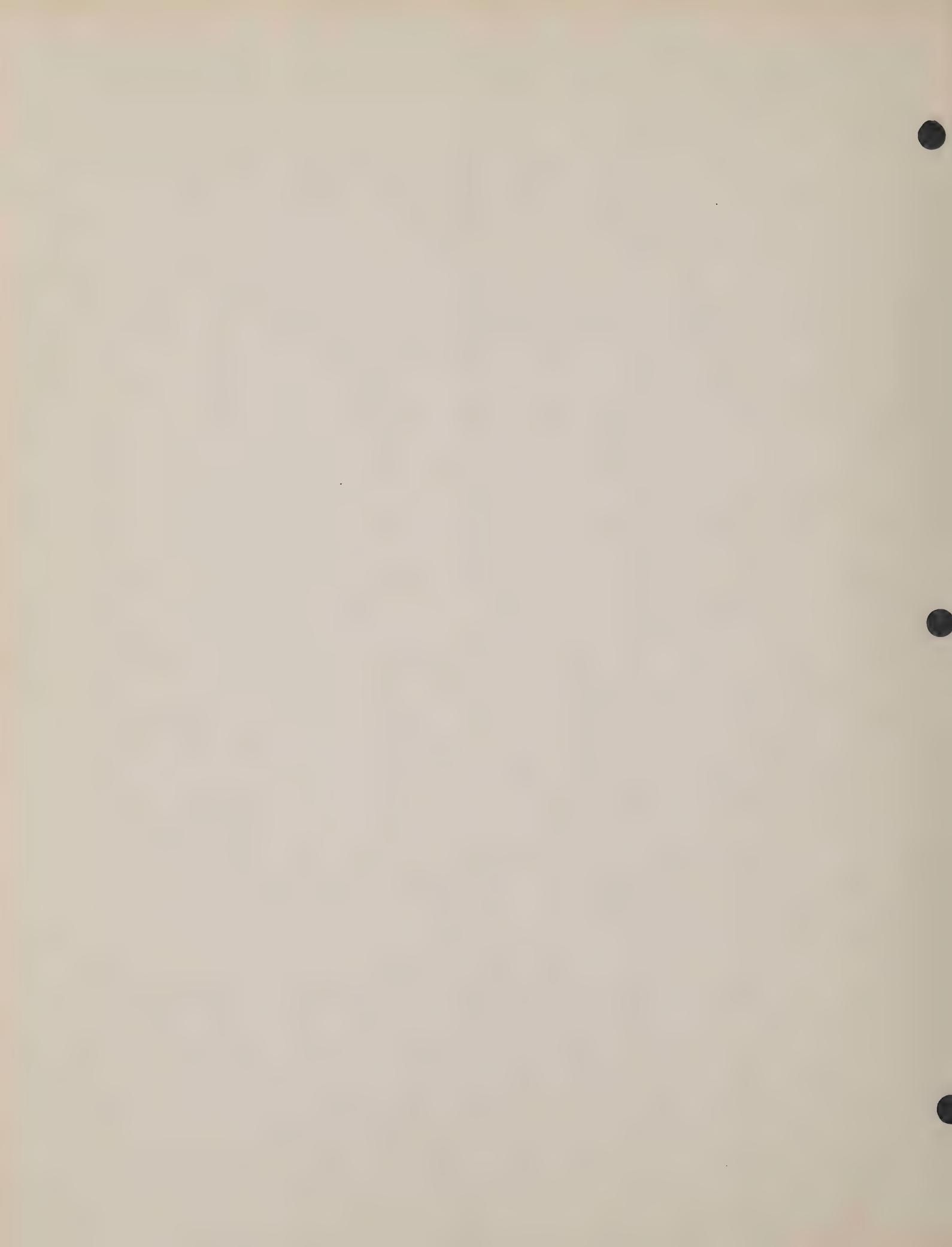
Wednesday morning I came to the Seminary in a mood of exultation
over a happy idea that occurred to me for a Rosh Hashanah sermon. It
was the idea that God anticipated our challenge of Him these days when
we sit in judgment upon Him for permitting such misery in the world.
This is the meaning of (p.267) . Then I went on to say that
the first thing we have to realize that our very notion of God has been
mistaken right along in that we counted on peace and prosperity as pay-
ment for the homage we paid him in our rites and observances. When I
was through developing the idea, up popped first Shoop and then Goldberg
with the question: "But won't the people infer from what we say that
they ought to disregard all religious observances?" For apparently no
good reason I lost my temper and fired away at them for even suggesting
such a question. In reality, however, there was a very good subconscious
-- if not reason -- at least, cause for being irritated. My subconscious
heard the Yeshiva speak through Shoop and Finkelstein through Goldberg.
Shoop is a graduate of the Yeshiva College and Goldberg teaches Finkel-
stein's children and is a (p.267) in his home. But even so I should
have held the wild dogs of anger in leash. Instead I just let them have
their way and they snapped and yelped with savage fury. When the



session was over I apologized in front of the class to the two men. But I am afraid there was little of true repentance in that apology.

The session with the students on Thursday ran off without any incident and yesterday's session was highly gratifying. By the Socratic method I succeeded in building up with the students a well organized sermon on the theme of the Shofar: (p.267) . I indicated to them the technique by which a desideratum which is expressed metaphorically can be developed into a statement which would indicate how it can be attained. In this case the desideratum is to have our people ~~threw~~ off the lethargy which has taken possession of them. The first question is what specifically does that lethargy consist in? The students suggested four different manifestations of it: 1) over-optimism; 2) over-pessimism; 3) shifting of responsibility in others and 4) feeling that Judaism is irrelevant. At this point I interposed with the rabbinic interpretation of and pointed out that the first three categories fall within the scope of that text. Not so the fourth. Those to whom Judaism is irrelevant are not even present in the synagogue. And here I applied the principle of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The thesis is 1) Jews who regard Judaism as relevant but do nothing about it; 2) Jews who regard it as irrelevant; 2) the former are the cause of the latter. If Judaism had made a difference in the lives of people who attend synagogue, etc. we would not have Jews who regard Judaism as irrelevant.

A 4th year student of the Jewish Institute of Religion - Kosofsky - came to see me yesterday to learn more about Reconstructionism which he wants to write on in his graduation thesis. Although he had read what I have written I found that he had missed up entirely on my conception of nationalism. He thought that mine was of the usual antarchic kind. I had to read to him from "Judaism as a Civilization" to convince him that I deprecated such a thing as absolute national sovereignty.



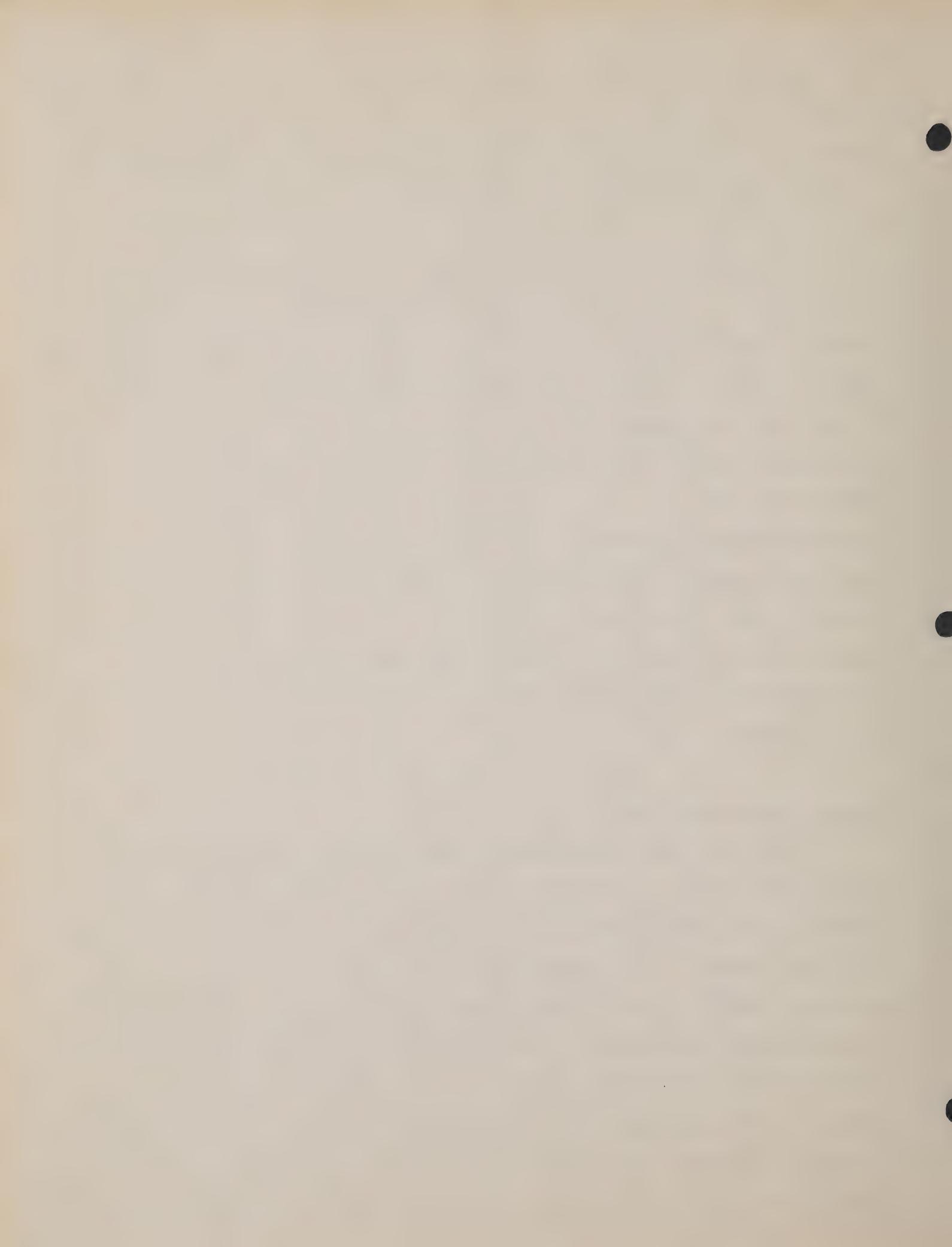
He questioned me on my conception of God and asked me pointedly whether I subscribed to the notion of a finite God. My answer was definitely in the affirmative. He then told me that Prof. Slonimsky at the JIR held and taught the same view.

If I had been in my youth as eager to write as I have come to be in recent years, I would have published by this time a whole library of books. A day in which I do not write down some new thought seems to me wasted. Even reading what is worthwhile does not seem to satisfy me. I have read and enjoyed the last few days about 100 pages of Mann's "Joseph in Egypt," Wieman's "Issues of Life" and the greater part of Amisai's (p.268) Vol. II. But I have written nothing and that makes me restless. All I have done was to rewrite on Thursday night the prayer based on the first Psalm, and to write one this morning based on today's reading in the Torah . I read the latter at the services and Ira and Lena said they liked it. So did Rabbi Burnstine, but nobody else. (That I can honestly say doesn't bother me in the least.)

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Sunday, Sept. 22, 1940

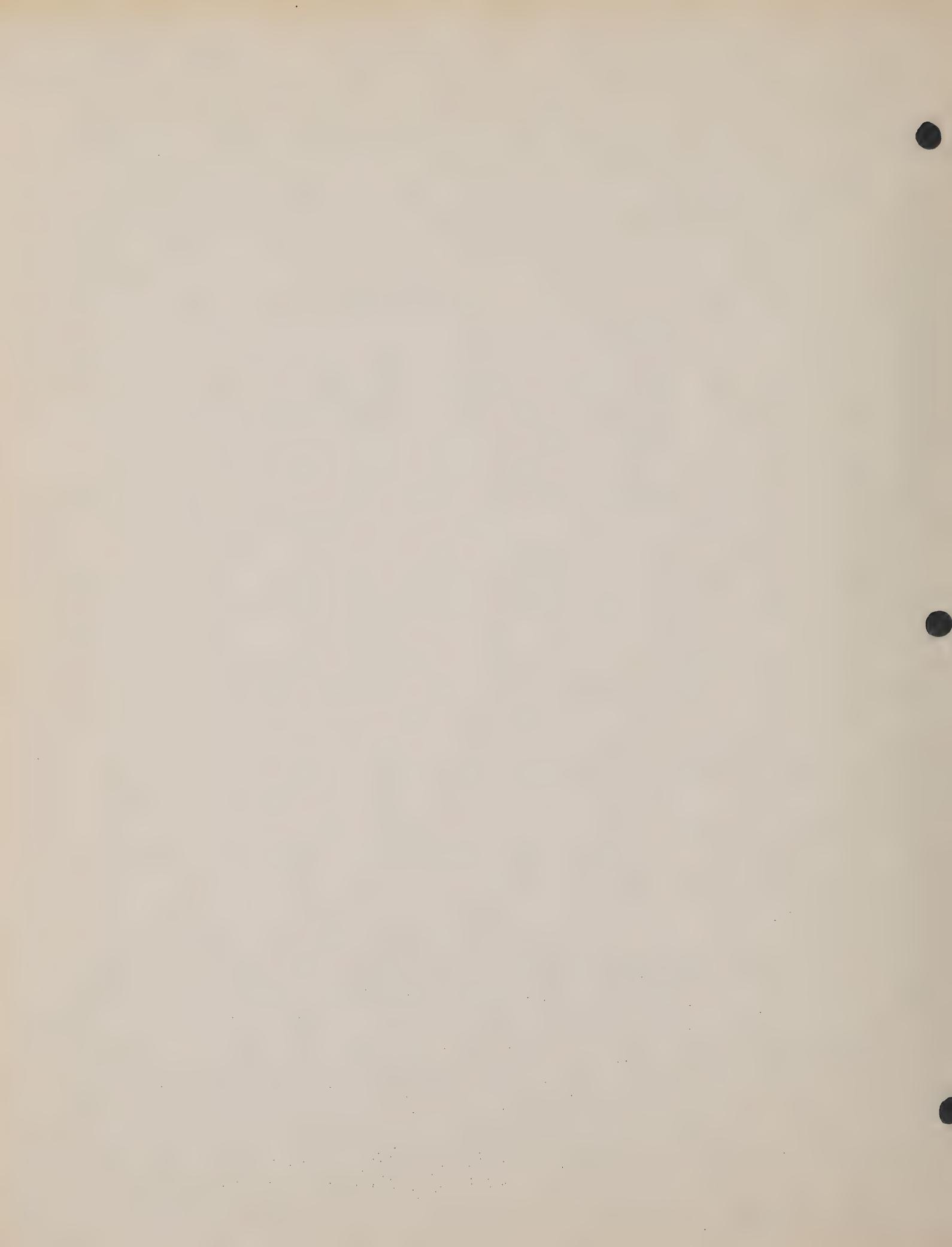
I was very much impressed by a passage in Jefferson's tribute to Washington, which I happened to come across recently. "He has often declared to me," says Jefferson, "that he considered our new Constitution as an experiment in the practicability of republican government, and with what ~~does~~ ^{dose} of liberty man can be trusted for his own good; that he was determined the experiment should have a fair trial, and would lose the last drop of blood in support of it." This reminded me of what I had heard Edwin E. Aubrey of the University of Chicago say at the Conference on Science Philosophy and Religion. He described the experimental attitude as a "combination of commitment to a hypothesis for



purposes of investigation and tentativeness in the acceptance of the results yielded." And he asked the question "Can one commit himself whole-heartedly to that which he at the same time regards as a tentative judgment?" The case of Washington proves that one can if one wants to, in fact must, if what one wants is true democracy. Unless human beings can cultivate that combination of flexibility and firmness no worthwhile purpose in society can ever be achieved. This is true not only of democracy but also of Judaism.

Take e.g. the problem of Sabbath observance. I have been advocating a policy of reasonable adjustment to modern needs in the way the Sabbath is to be observed, but I am certainly opposed to treating it like an ordinary weekday. Yet most of my own colleagues find it difficult to draw the line between leaving it to the individual to determine what constitutes Sabbath observance and giving up the Sabbath altogether. I find that if I were to refrain from writing down some of the things that come to my mind, I would come to look upon the Sabbath as an obstacle to my self-realization. But that does not mean that I would spend the Sabbath afternoon packing books into boxes to have them ready for the moving van which is not due before ten days. This does not mean that I would do away with the beautiful ceremony of Havdalah. And yet Ira and Judith do go to the length which I believe is bound to destroy the Sabbath entirely. Why?

In the September issue of the Reader's Digest there appeared an article by A. Carrel on the value of self-discipline. I ~~wrote~~ culled a number of telling sentences from the article, arranged and edited some of them so as to weave them into a connected reading for congregational services. I obtained the permission of the Reader's Digest people to publish the reading. The same might be done with a great many of present day writings. I find e.g. Mumford's new book "Faith for Living" rich in



material for such readings. If religious organizations had the sense to utilize all this wealth of material in their worship, people would flock to the synagogues and churches.

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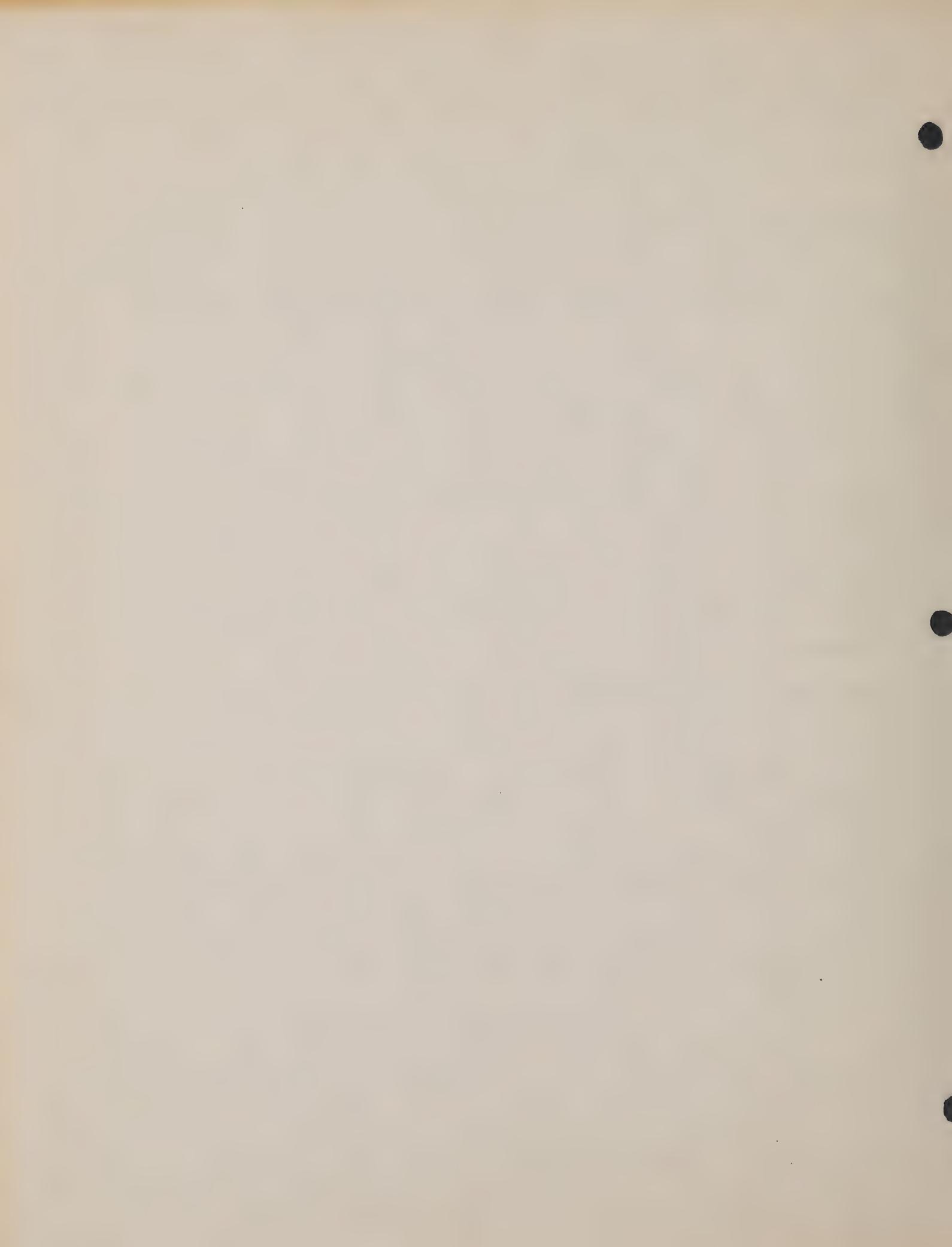
Monday, Sept. 23, 1940

This morning I met about a dozen rabbis -- all of them Seminary graduates -- to discuss with them sermons for the High Holidays.

This afternoon I attended a meeting of the Seminary faculty, which was devoted to the admission of new students.

When Finkelstein passed out the schedule for the coming year I noticed that Prof. Liberman was scheduled to teach Talmud. This is the Liberman I met in Jerusalem. He has a reputation of being a great Talmudist. It would have been the gentlemanly thing for Finkelstein at least to apprise us of the appointment of Liberman to the faculty. Ginzberg and Marx were probably the only ones who were consulted. I suppose F. would consider his casual mention to me about a year ago that it would be worthwhile getting Liberman on the faculty as having discharged his duty of consulting me. It so happened that at the Matz Foundation meeting which took place at my home when I came from the Seminary, Dr. Schwartz asked me whether it was true that Liberman was appointed on the faculty of the Seminary. Fortunately I was able to appear as though I knew all about the appointment. But if he had asked me the question earlier in the day I would have felt embarrassed and humiliated.

When I left the meeting Ginzberg and Marx followed me into the elevator. I expressed to them my resentment at what I indicated was an unfriendly thing to do. I don't know whether I should have said to them what I did or I should have just swallowed the insult. In any event I really and truly do not recall a single meeting with the Seminary people when I do not go away from them with my nerves frazzled.



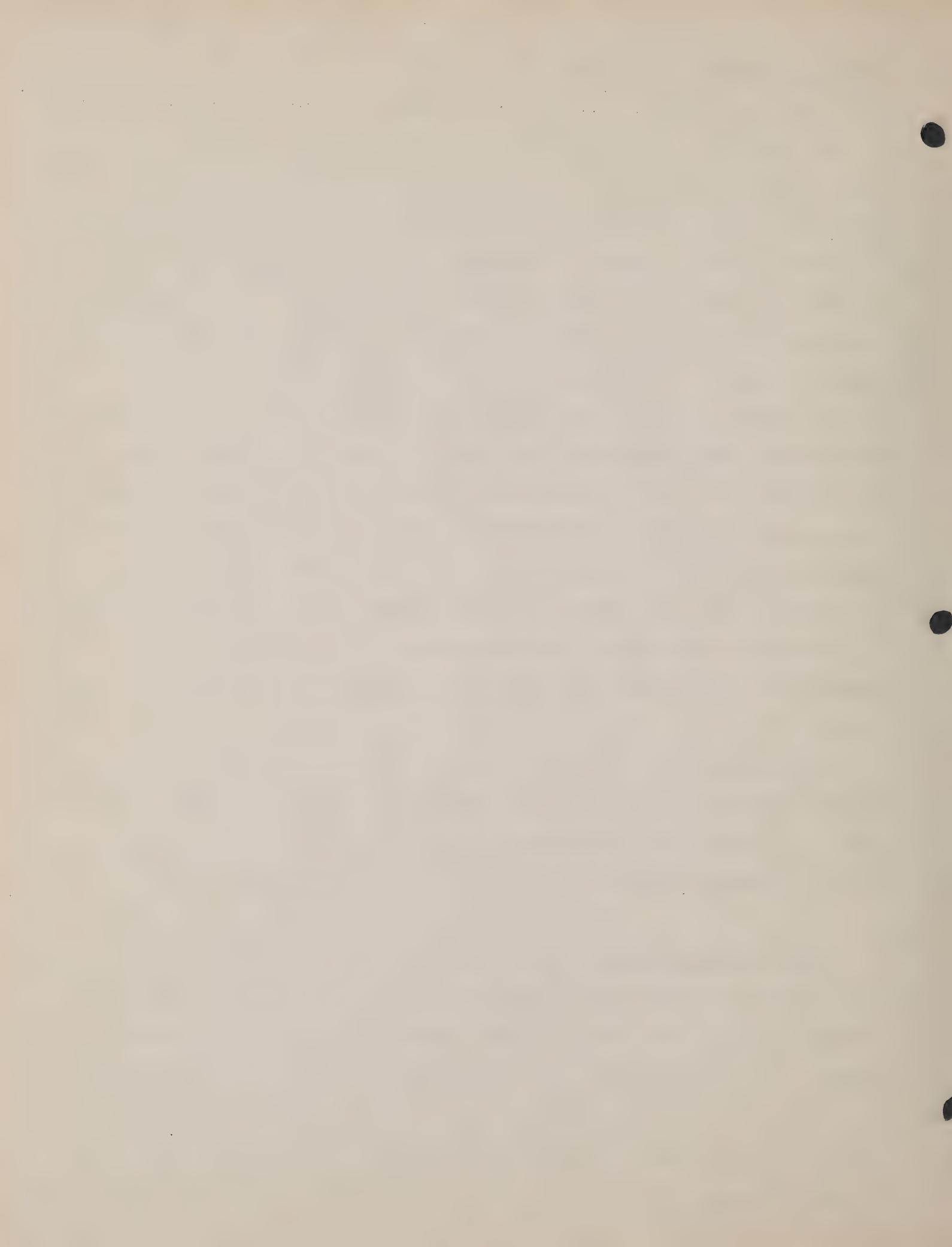
Tuesday, September 24, 1940

The advantage of the soterical approach is that in reestablishing the psychological process by which we arrive at the awareness of a Power not ourselves etc. we get to know how to deal with the problem of atheism. We then do not make the mistake of trying to demonstrate the existence of God by means of argument, but concentrate on arriving at a clear understanding of what kind of life we regard as worthwhile, and therefore as the one we strive to achieve. We must expect diversity of opinion on the two basic propositions: 1) concerning the fact that life can be worthwhile and 2) concerning the particular kind of life that is worthwhile. We must remember however that there is no way of proving the validity of either proposition. Buddhism and pessimism deny the first proposition and the divergence on the second proposition between those who subscribe to Fascism and those who believe in democracy is impassable. Both the fact of worthwhileness and the kind of life that is worthwhile are ultimate affirmations. It is this ultimateness of theirs that they transfer to the belief in the Power that makes for salvation.

In contrast with the attitude of detachment preached by Santayana, Edman, Lipman and Aldous Huxley I would advocate the attitude of attachment to a cause which makes for salvation (p.270)

It is only such attachment that renders life worthwhile.

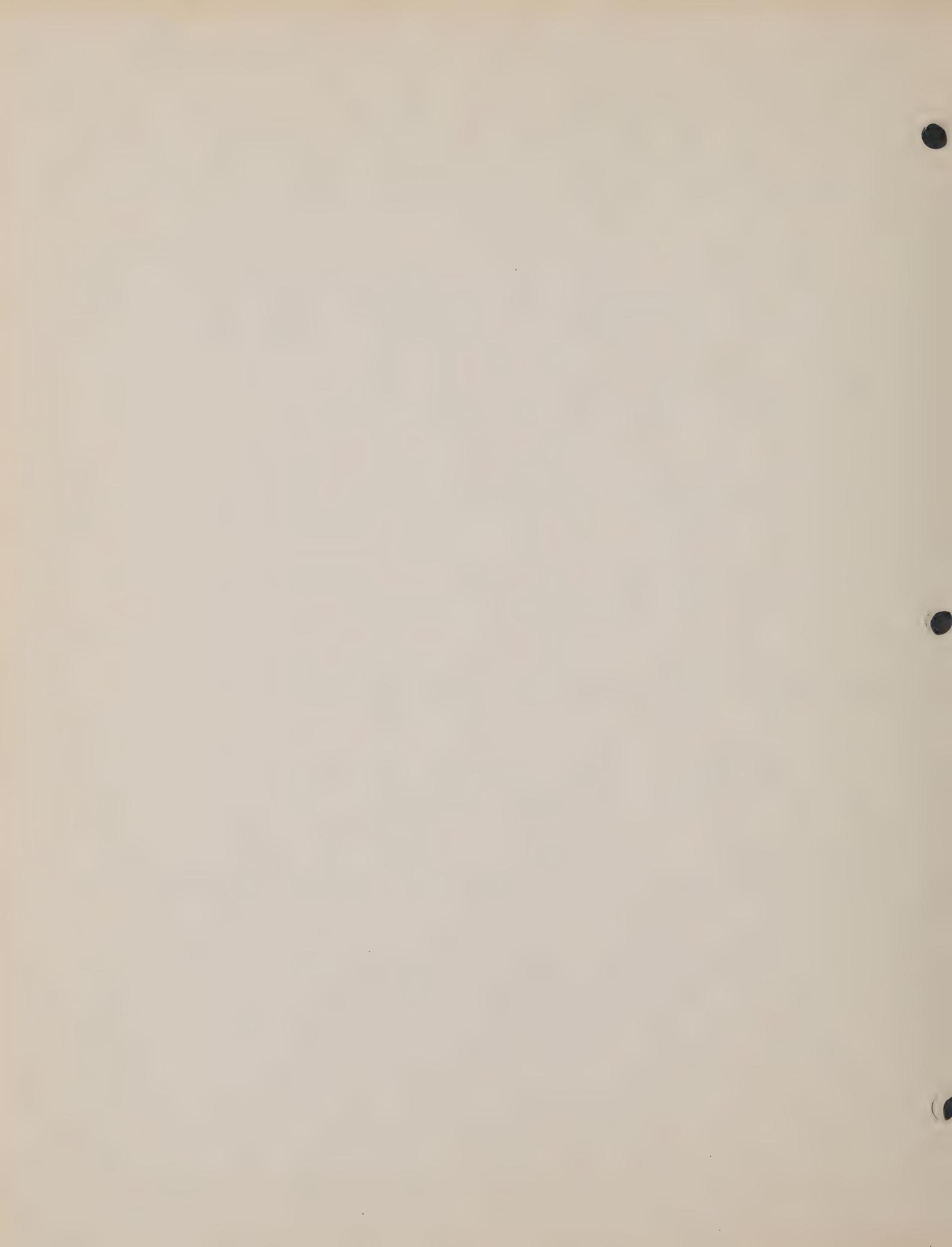
Neither harmony nor being at peace with oneself can be regarded as constituting a criterion of worthwhileness. The reason is that either criterion may go with very opposite conceptions of worthwhileness. The Fascist and the Epicurean may achieve inner peace. The true criterion lies not within the individual nor the particular society of which he is a member but is logically independent of him (though metaphysically it is only in part independent.) It is objective and absolute, for it



consists of truth and goodness. These often bring inner conflict. Such conflict should be preferred to inner harmony or peace based upon falsehood and fear. All this goes to prove that the Power that makes for salvation cannot be ourselves, but is necessarily a Power -- not ourselves.

I have just had a talk with Dembowitz -- a 4th year student at the Seminary, who is president of the Young People's League of the United Synagogue. He came to see me about his plans with the League. He claims that the League consists of about 200 groups with a membership of about 10,000. So far its programs which were related to the Jewish and American holidays have been attempting to develop in the young people a sense of attachment to the synagogue by means of cultural and social activities. Dembowitz expressed a feeling of dissatisfaction with those activities because they did not seem to be integrated about any specific purpose other than attachment to the synagogue.

I pointed out to him that the League would not be able to make any headway so long as it lacked an affirmative philosophy of Jewish life. That philosophy it could get only from Reconstructionism which it must be prepared to accept frankly. Here, of course, is the rub. Dembowitz thought he could carry on activities in the spirit of that philosophy which he would keep in the back of his mind. I made it plain to him that he would be deceiving himself and accomplishing nothing. This timidity of those who have the right beliefs but are afraid to keep them in the front of their mind where everybody might recognize them explains why those who have the wrong beliefs but are proud of them are victorious. Dembowitz promised he would give the matter due consideration.



It occurred to me as I took my evening stroll that it would be a fine thing to organize a large public gathering at Carnegie Hall sometime in the middle of the year for the purpose of setting forth the relation of the Reconstructionist movement to democracy. The point should be made that the function of Reconstructionism is to have democracy replace both feudalism (the charity barons) and clericalism (the pulpit orators) in Jewish life.

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Wednesday, Sept. 25, 1940

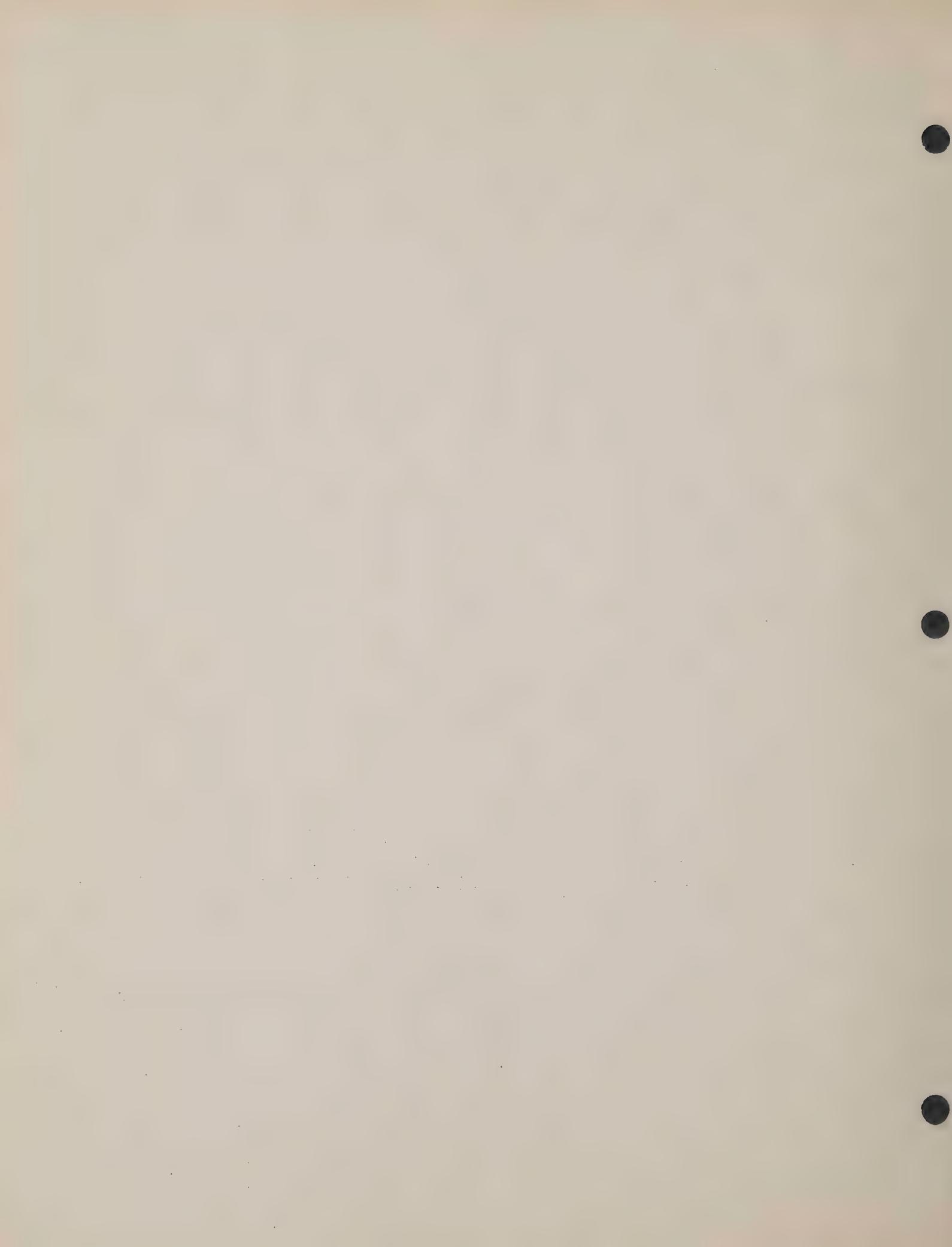
Growth in faith, which is one of the three aspects of growth that should constitute salvation is, among other things, growth in the ability to make the certainty of death "count at every moment in one's plan and actions for living" (Mumford). Salvation has for a long time meant essentially overcoming death. No matter what interpretation we shall henceforth give to salvation, the transcendence of death and of the fear of death will have to be in the forefront of salvation. This can be the case only as a result of becoming habituated in viewing our own personal life as incomplete and meaningless apart from the larger life of the world with its past and future, and in so interweaving our own with that larger life that we would welcome death rather than share the life of a world that is resigned to the ignominy of bondage to wicked men. We should have such faith in the meaning of life that we might view our own death, to the extent that it is caused by natural laws of disintegration to which all ~~compos~~^{own} entities are subject, as part of the process which contributes to that meaning. But there is a higher faith which life exacts from us. That is the faith that there/occasions when we must actually submit to premature death in order that life as a whole shall take on meaning, and that it actually does take on that meaning when we do so submit. When justice, freedom and the dignity of human personality are at stake we should expose our bodies to torture and death for their sake



in the confidence that the sacrifice is not in vain. "A life sacrificed at the right moment is a life well spent," says L. Mumford in "Faith for Living" p. 81)"while a life too carefully hoarded, too ignominiously preserved, is a life utterly wasted." "Life at its highest and intensest has nothing to do with the mere maintenance of the physical body " (p. 140 ibid).

It would be a serious mistake to fail to give in the normative conception of salvation the primary place to power. Life is power. Life abundant can mean nothing else than the possible utilization of abundant power. "God as the Power that makes for salvation" would be an empty phrase if in planning the attainment of salvation/were to imagine that salvation consists in anything that is not power, either actual or potential. It is therefore necessary, whenever we deal with the normative concept of salvation, always to remember that our concern is with the achievement and utilization of power. Thus when we speak of faith, it is faith in the ultimate increase of power to be utilized in accordance with the values of truth and goodness as embodied in a life of wisdom and a democratic state of society. All values which are not values of power are mere verbiage. It is because the readiness to make sacrifice constitutes power that it is so important in the scheme of salvation.

If we carry over this thought to the process by which we seek to achieve salvation, we realize that that process is essentially one which involves the practical problem of achieving and utilizing power. Education should accordingly not be viewed merely as a transmission of a heritage, or adjusting to environment but as training in the art of achieving and utilizing power.



The illusion under which religionists and ethicists have labored is that while there may be technical differences in the formulation of what men regard as worth living for, they are at bottom agreed as to the meaning of life and the kind of life they consider as most worthwhile. Religionists have generally assumed that all human beings would concede that kindness is better than cruelty, truth better than falsehood, beauty better than ugliness. Ethicists merely wrangled as to what validates the superiority of one over the other, whether it was utility, intuition or divine revelation. It must therefore come as a shock to realize that the very opposite is the case. The emergence of the nazi barbarism has demonstrated that the human being can as easily set up a world of values which are the very reverse of those which were hitherto believed to be universally accepted as axiomatic.

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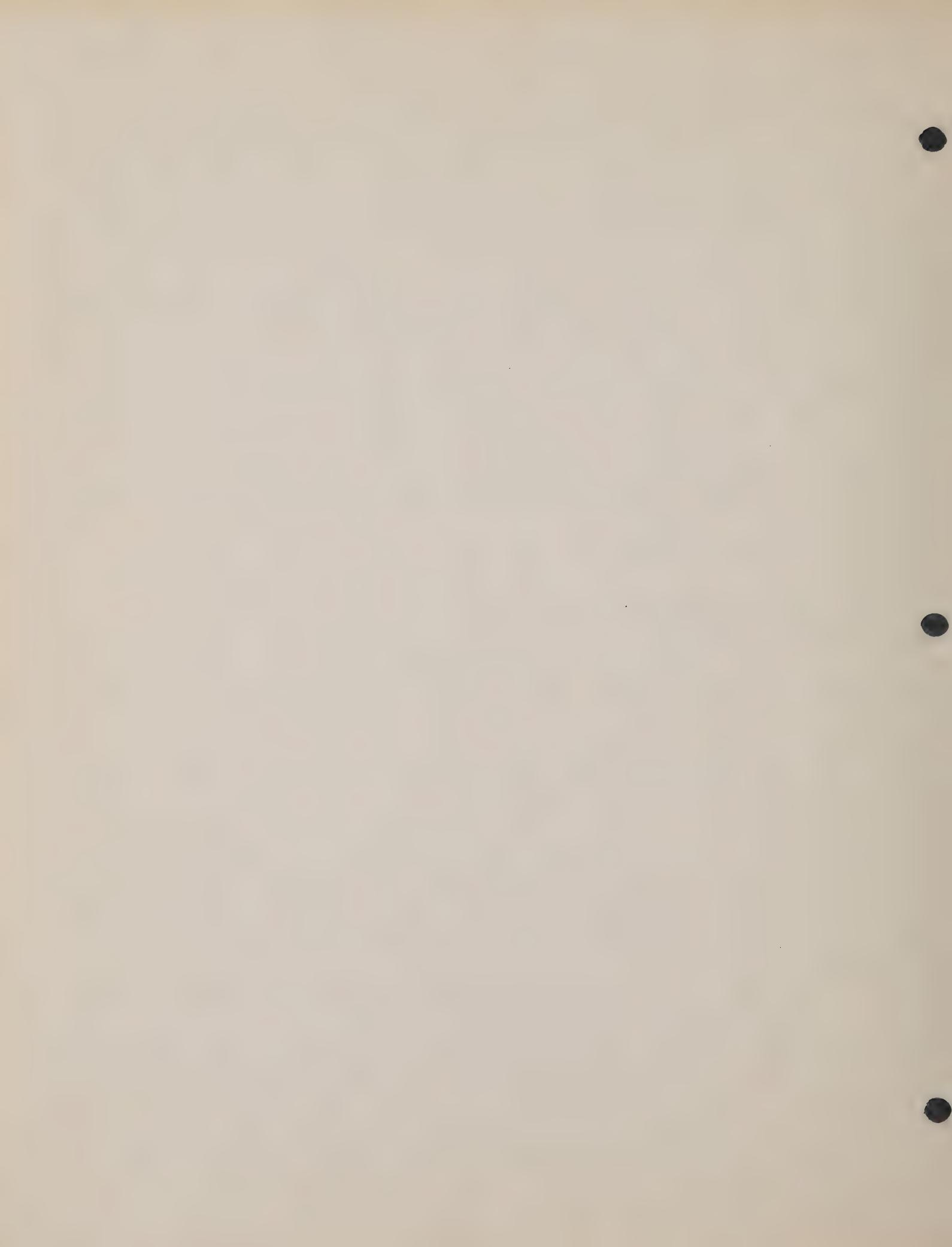
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Thursday, Sept. 26, 1940

A basic problem in the normative approach to the conception of salvation is the relation of what ought to be to what is. In the religious tradition the two are generally regarded as antithetical to each other. The very notion that man ought to live forever, which is implied in the medieval conception of salvation, is a challenge to the actual mortality of man. In fact so general is the mutual antithesis in the religious tradition, that one might almost say that the ideal is to be or do that which is contrary to what one is or what one is naturally inclined to do.

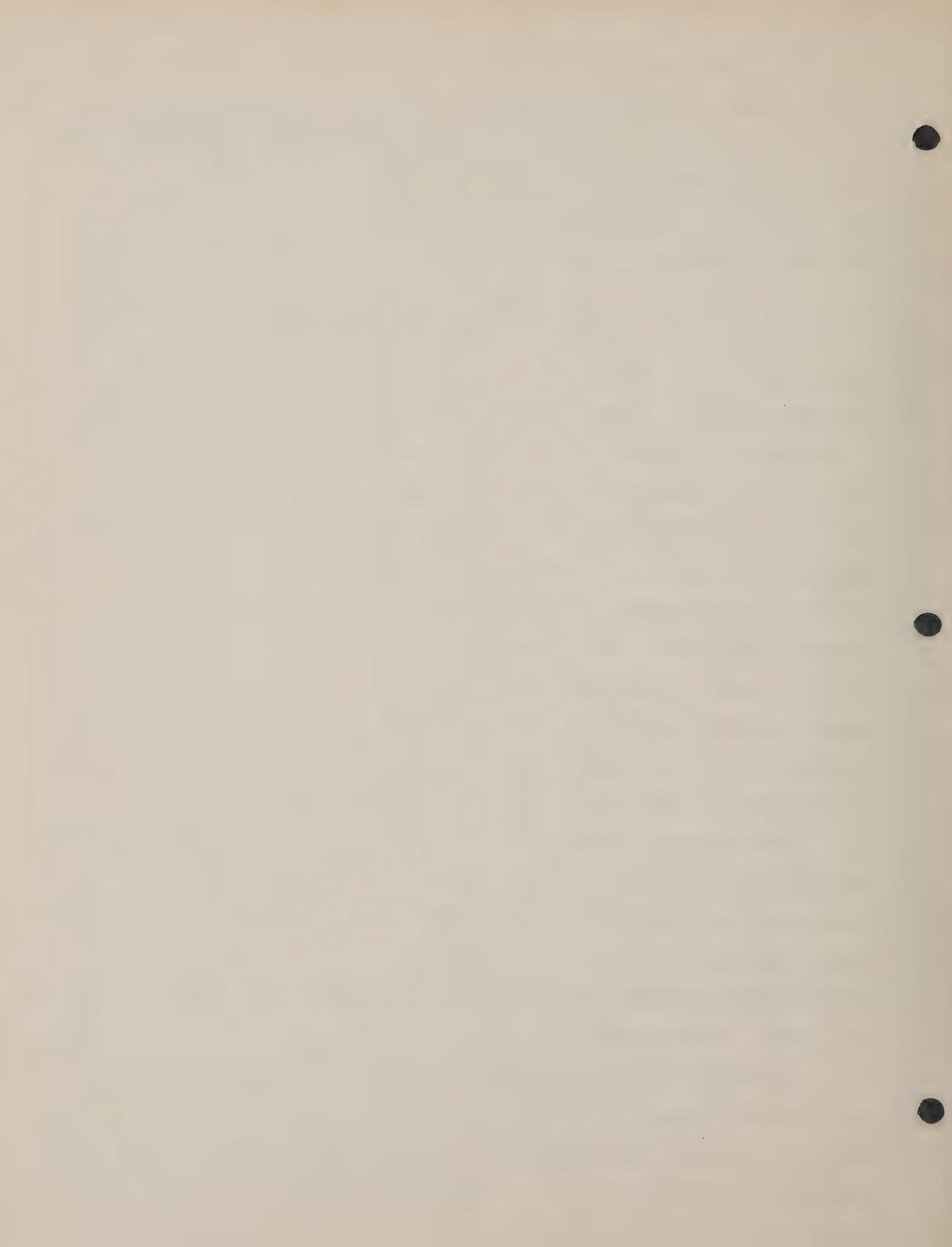
The Stoics made salvation to mean living according to nature. But we must remember that for them nature had the very opposite meaning of what it has to us. For them nature was the incarnation of reason and reason meant not what the senses indicate to be a fact but what the mind or spirit indicates ought to be the fact. Thus Stoicism was true to the prevailing trend of religion.



It is only since the Renaissance, especially during the last century, that the idea of setting up what is, or nature in the modern sense, as the standard or guide of what out to be, has come into vogue. Machhiaveli's "Prince" is based on the assumption that the actual striving of those in power to entrench themselves in that power, no matter at what cost to life and decency is perfectly legitimate and should constitute the norm of political science. The main impulse to resort to nature or the actual as a standard for a way of life was given by the Romantic school in the beginning of the 19th century. So long as the Romantics romanticized about nature, and read into it their wish thoughts instead of observing it objectively, no great harm could come from their identification of the ought with the is. But when biology became more than a matter of classification, and something like the knowledge of ~~natural~~ natural laws based on cause and effect began to be part of it, such identification became a greater danger. When Darwin formulated the principle of natural selection, the attempt to convert that into a principle of human behavior was bound to lead to very dangerous consequences. Huxley seeing at once that such an attempt might be made tried valiantly to forestall it by insisting that the human being asserts his humanity by combating nature which is red in tooth and claw.

Unfortunately Huxley's efforts to stem the tide of inference from Darwinian biology were in vain. Both Marx and Nietzsche, especially the latter, raised the natural law of struggle for existence into a norm of human existence and survival. Marx's class struggle and Nietzsche's ideal of the superman are high pressure attempts to make what is the sole criterion of what ought to be.

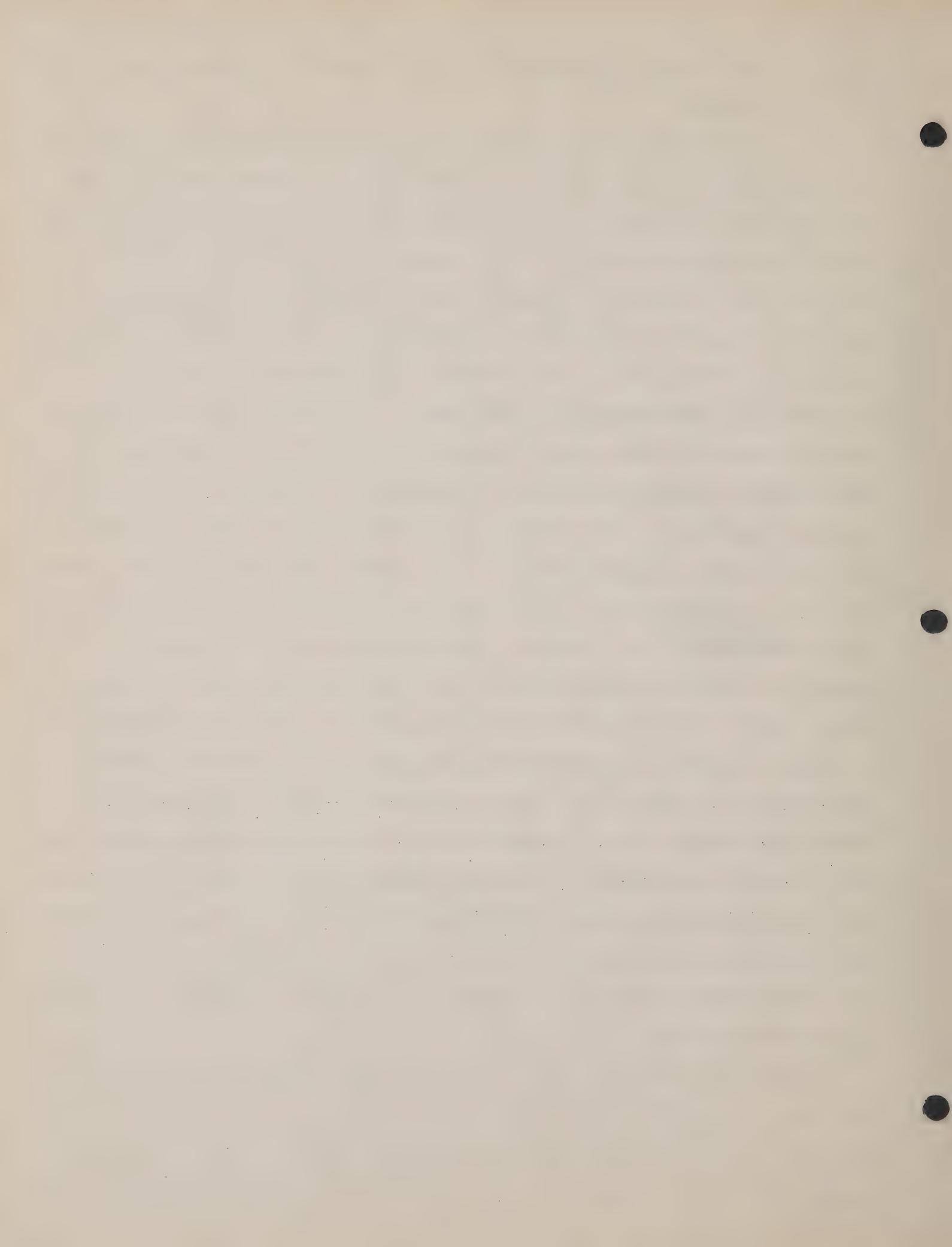
In England characteristically enough the moralistic approach to the relation between what is and what ought to be has persisted. This is significantly reflected in the literature which satirizes the German tendency to identify the two, by reducing it to an absurdity. Butler's



Shaw's
Erenohn, Stein's Back to Methusaleh and A. Huxley's This New Brave World
are such satires.

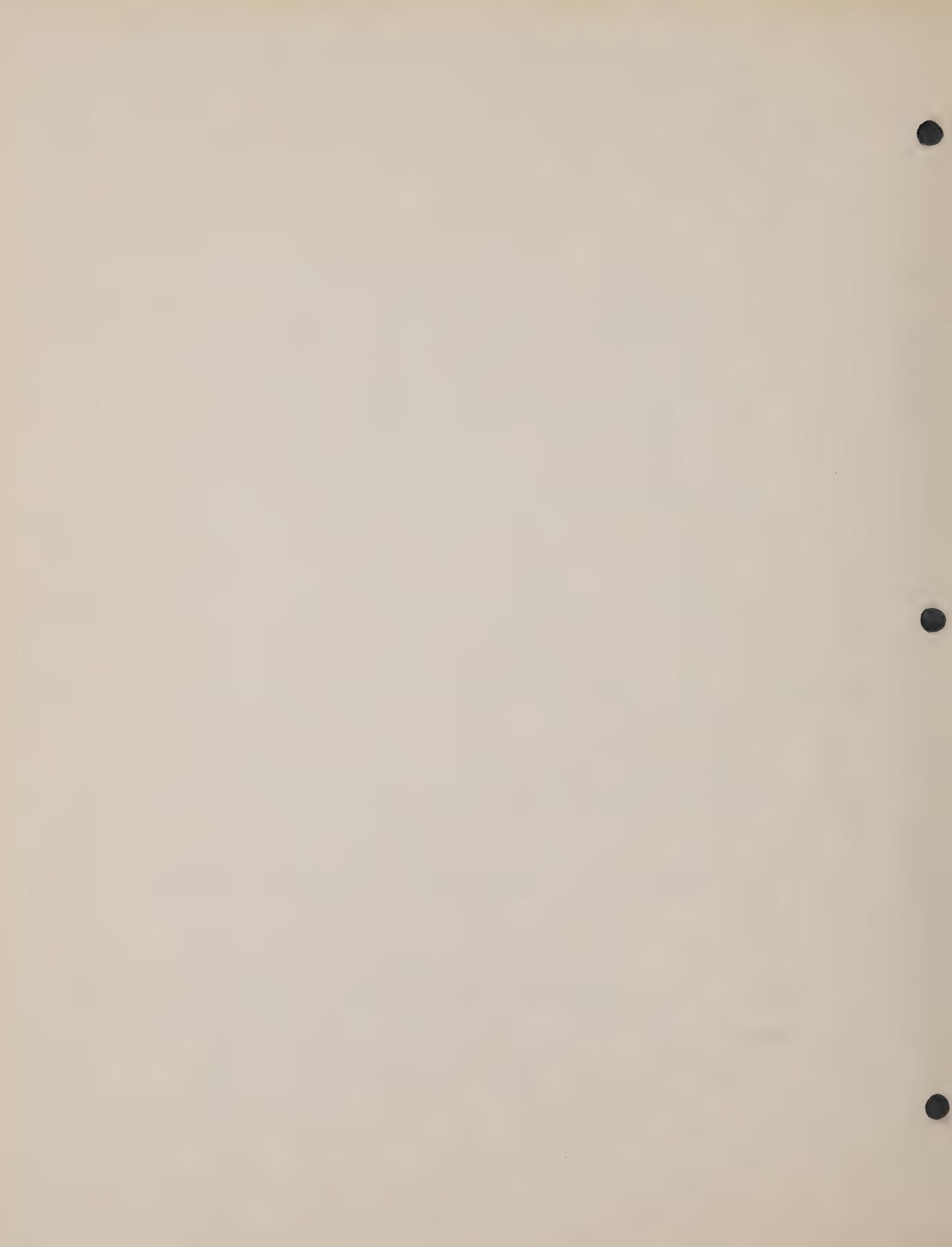
What is actually wrong with identifying the ought with the is, and why have religionists and moralists intuitively felt that the two are antithetical? (William James, e.g. describes morality as conduct in the line of greatest resistance). The answer is perhaps to be found in the fact that our knowledge of what is, whether empirical or scientific, is necessarily partial, incomplete and abstracted from the totality of existence, if for no other reason than that we necessarily ignore its possibilities and relationships to the cosmos. Whatever we recognize as existent is only a stage in some process or an element of something organic. The subhuman creature incapable of knowledge is unaware of both the immediately existent and the ultimate of which that existent is a part. But its instinct somehow drives it to do that which makes for the ultimate. An example of that is its sex urge. It obeys it, and in obeying perpetuates it, it ~~perpetuates~~ its species. The perpetuation of its species is the organic fact which constitutes, as it were, the ought for the animal. Man by stint of his mental powers is capable of breaking up the organic clusters of actions and events into disparate, but in reality, abstract and incomplete facts. This process of viewing facts disparately and abstractly enables him to reconstruct his environment and to render it more livable for himself. Provided, however, that in doing so he does not ignore the great organic totalities from which the disparate events and actions are abstracted. Provided also that he does not set up any of the disparate events and actions or even any set of them as constituting an organic totality.

All this means that the human being intuitively realizes that whatever he observes in the world of nature or of human history, while very useful and indispensable to his efforts to make the best of his life, cannot tell the whole story. What the whole story must be for him, he



derives from more basic sources than those which supply him with the full awareness of what is. Whether it is revelation as with the ancients or intuition as with the moderns, that directs his attention to a domain of being other than the actual, the domain of the ought, the very nature of that domain is such that it cannot be identical or coextensive with the domain of what is. That domain is the one in which those ideals dwell that are not derivable from but correctives of the natural man -- who is Man incomplete and abstract. The ideals of truth and kindness in our dealings with our fellowmen regardless of race, class, color, nationality or creed are not derivable from what we know of actual human nature. They are part of that domain -- traditionally known as the Kingdom of God -- in which human nature attains that completeness -- or salvation -- which it cannot find in its factual life. It is this, perhaps, that the Barthians are trying to articulate, when they make salvation entirely a supernatural and not a natural achievement. It is not necessary, however, to give the impression that the attainment of salvation or the achievement of the ought is impossible for man. The domain of the ought or the Kingdom of God, is immanent in man as well as transcendent, and cannot come into being without him. So why go to such length as the Barthians do when contrasting salvation with nature, as to convey the impression that salvation can be only God's doing? It is sufficient to stress the diversity of the ought from the is and the danger of identifying the two.

It is so long since I have recorded the courses I have been giving at the Seminary that I am not sure of the accuracy of the first three or four of the following items (cont. from Vol. VII, p. 148):



1934-5	(p.274)	Principles of Ethical Criticism (Soterics)
1935-6	"	The Meaning of God, etc. (mimeographed sheets)
1936-7	"	Judaism as a Civilization, Part I
1939-40	"	Modern Trends in Judaism, Part I
1940-41	"	Judaism as a Civilization, Part II
1941-42	"	Soterics
1942-43	"	Moore's Judaism
1943-44	"	Philosophies of Religion

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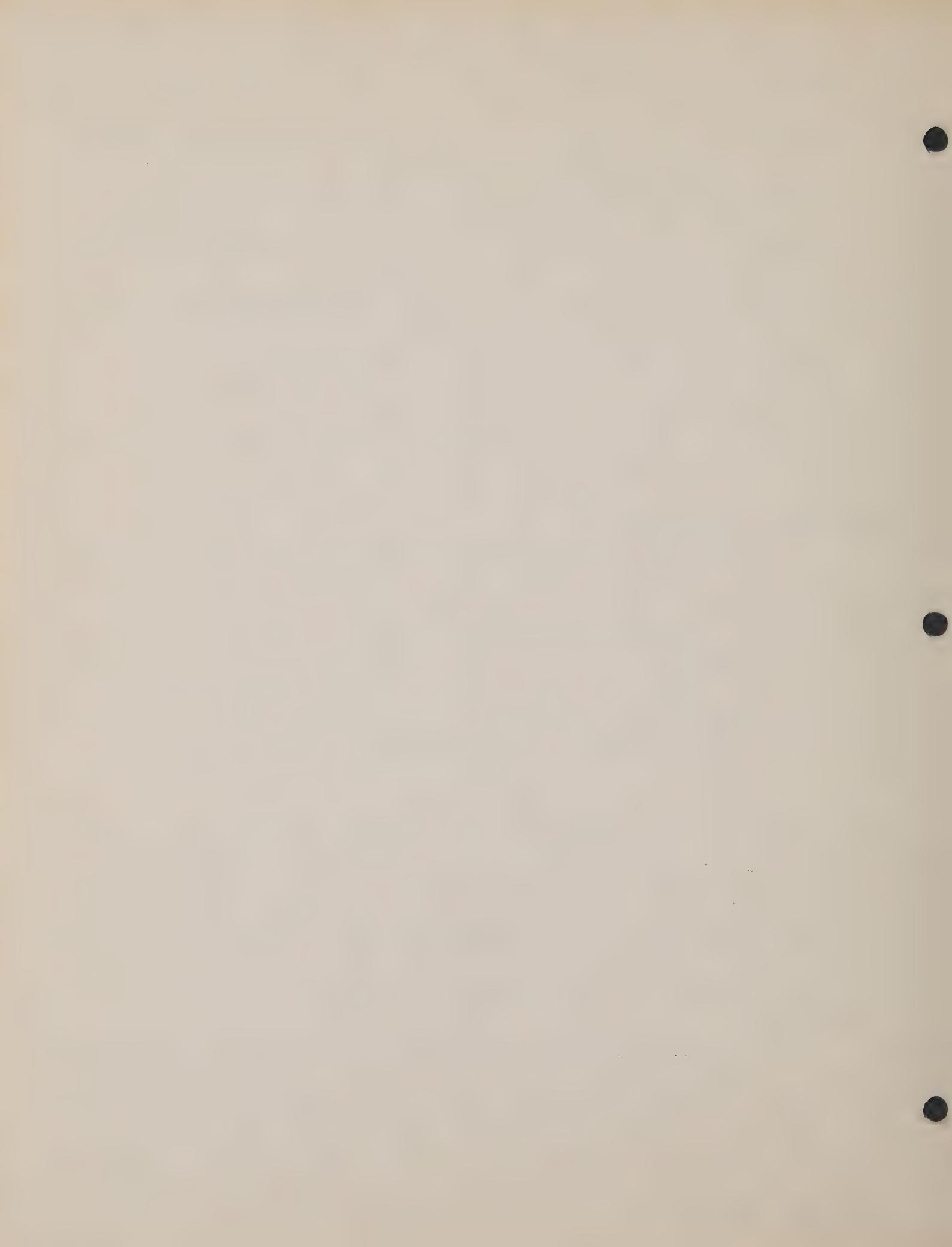
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Wednesday, Oct. 2, 1940

Long before the Greek philosophers came upon the notion that the human differentia consists in knowledge and that true salvation can be attained only through knowledge, the Upanishads taught to the same effect. "Of knowledge, verily, is man constituted, as is his knowledge in this world, so, when he hath gone hence doth he become. After knowledge, then, let him strive" (quoted by Moore I 273).

I can very well imagine the ancient Hindu thinkers going through almost the same process of introspection which I described above and which led me to a sense of identity between the self and God. For how else could they have come to have regarded Brahman, the self-existent creative principle of the world, as identical with Atman, the true self or inner being of man?

The assumption that knowledge is the very essence of man and that its attainment means salvation comes probably as a result of man's fresh discovery of his ability to think and to arrive at a recognition of identities. The very ability to achieve so daring a formula as tat toun asi (That art Thou) must have so thrilled the discoverer of it



that he felt himself at that moment not man but God. As God he was emancipated from the fears and anxieties under which he had always labored, chiefly that of the eternal wheel or endless round of transmigrations that doomed him to suffer for past existences and prepared him for future suffering. By means of such knowledge as that of identity between Brahman and Atman the eternal wheel would at last be broken into. This conclusion was probably based upon the experience of the momentary thrill generalized into a timeless principle.

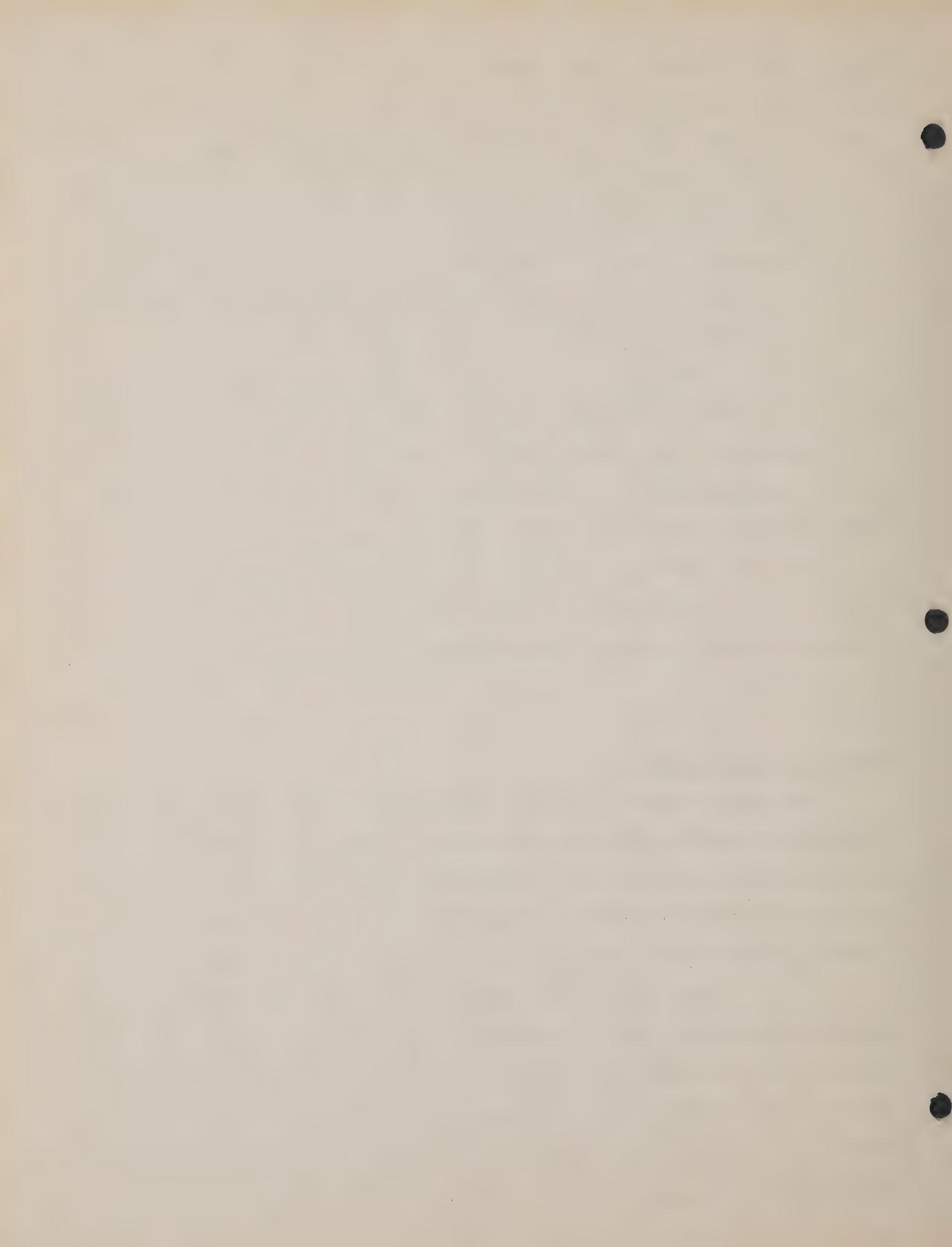
Right at that point we have the beginning of the dualism between body and mind which in Greek thought became the basis of the conception of salvation for the Western world. What this knowledge does, according to the Upanishads is to emancipate man from all his desire. The Hindu regarded all the evils from which man suffers as having their root in desire, and desire is of course the life of the body. This is why the life of the body was to him not really life but its negation. True life was only in the mind, in knowledge, which as such had nothing to do with body.

* * *

Monday, Oct. 7, 1940

The Gnostics were concerned primarily with the problem of soterics. According to Amisai, Christian Gnosticism is defined in Patristic literature as having for its object "the knowledge of what we are and what we have become, where we come from and into what kind of a world we have been thrown, whither we are going and from what we are to be saved" (p.275)

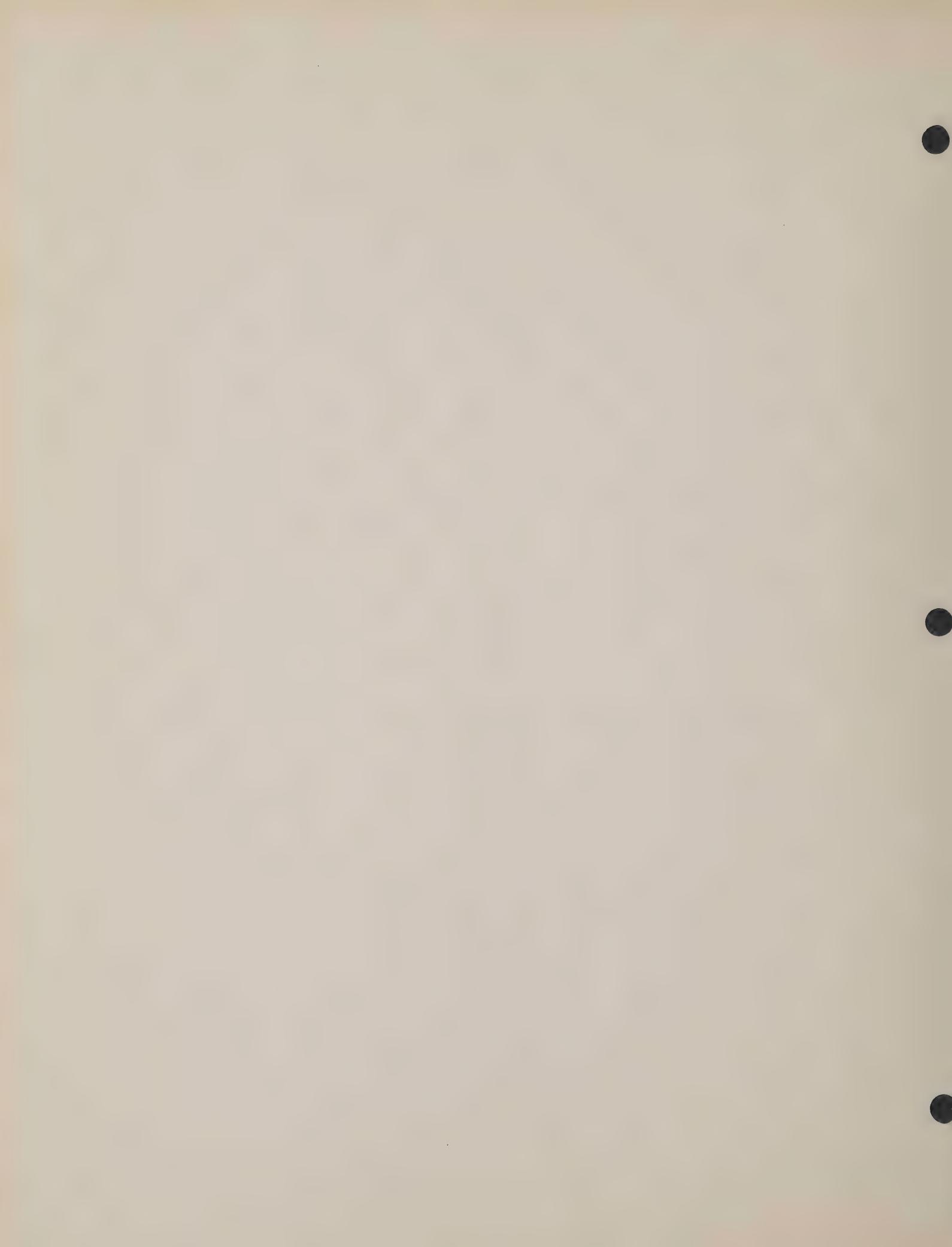
(Vol. II, p.253). What then is the essential difference between the Gnostic and the pragmatic approach to soterics? The Gnostic approach was very much vitiated by the theurgic conception of cause and effect. It lacked entirely the empirical sense for the meaning of experience and leaned heavily on all kinds of religious traditions which it never thought of subjecting to critical scrutiny. Modern soterics would



be an attempt to deal not with cosmogony or theogamy but entirely with the meaning of salvation and how it is to be attained. In answering these questions it would avail itself consistently of the most critical and constructive thinking in all fields of human research.

Two common fallacies against which we must ever be on our guard are: 1) the tendency to regard that which is indispensable as constituting the essential element of a thing or its main significance, and 2) the tendency to regard that which does not contribute the main significance to a thing as dispensable. This it is necessary to remember with reference to salvation. Salvation means the fulfillment of that which is most essentially human in us, of that which gives the maximum of meaning to human life. There are ~~xxx~~ basic ^{are} indispensable elements which are ~~xxx~~ to human life, such as health, freedom from anxiety, etc. These however do not constitute the essents of human life nor give it its unique significance. The meaning of human life is to be identified with reason, faith and democracy.

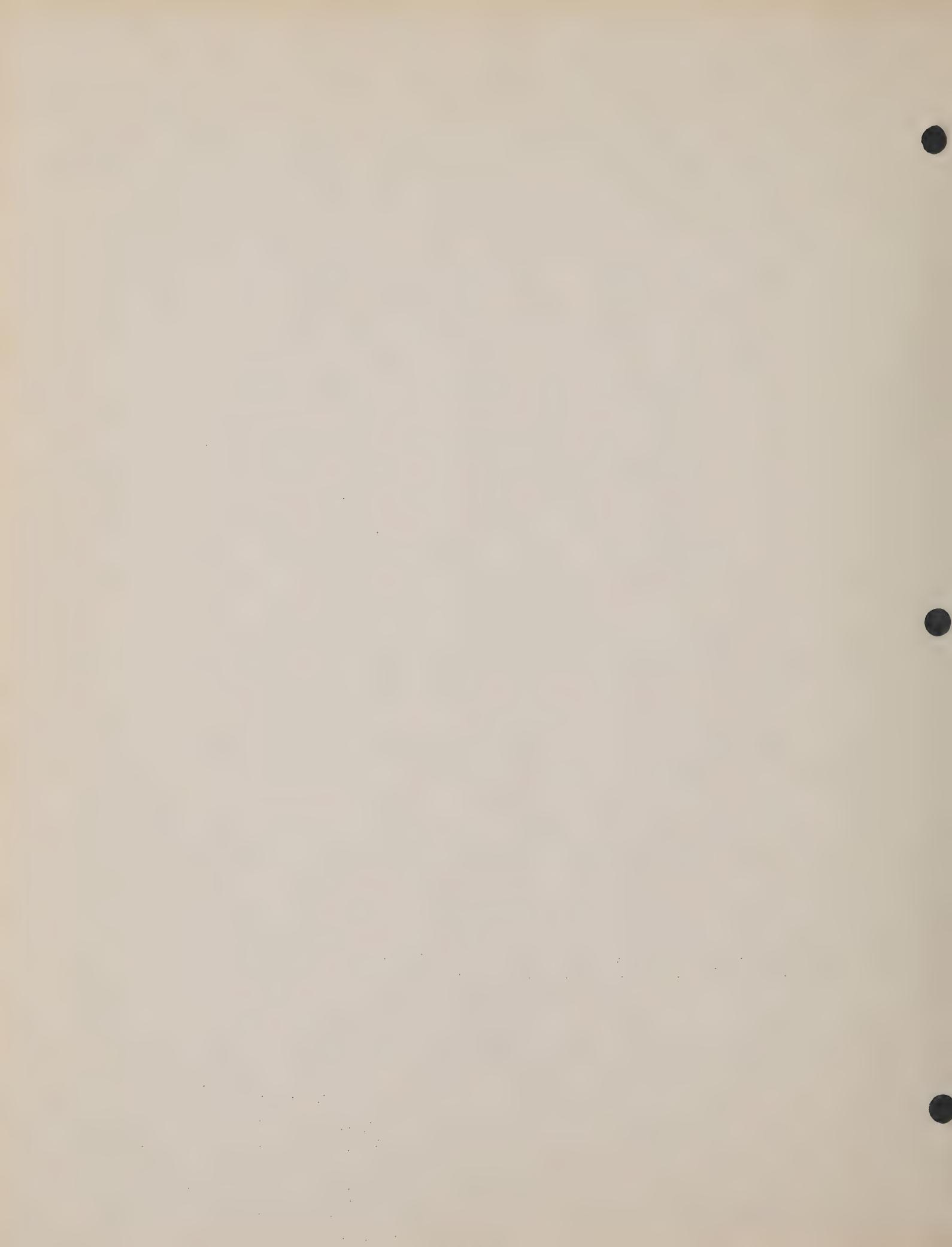
The Prophets achieved as much of a humanist or pragmatic notion of salvation as was possible in ancient times. In fact it was so free of theurgy that it failed to appeal to the masses to whom the Prophets addressed themselves. On the other hand the messianic conception of salvation as it finally developed into Christianity (in its primitive form) had a strong appeal to the masses, but it was entirely bound up with the theurgy of dualism -- a higher theurgy than that of polytheism but a theurgy nonetheless. The Messiah, who was a god-man in heaven and a man-god on earth, was ~~xxx~~ commissioned to save the world from the power of Satan and his human representative - ^{hom}omp.



Tuesday, Oct. 8. 1940

The essence of Jewish tragedy is that the Jewish people have been unable to find a solution for the conflict of two opposite tendencies within itself. One has been the tendency to regard the whole of mankind as the field of operation for its scheme of salvation. This may be termed soterical imperialism. The other tendency has been to treat Israel only as the field of operation, with the door open to all and sundry to identify themselves with Israel; this may be termed soterical isolationism.

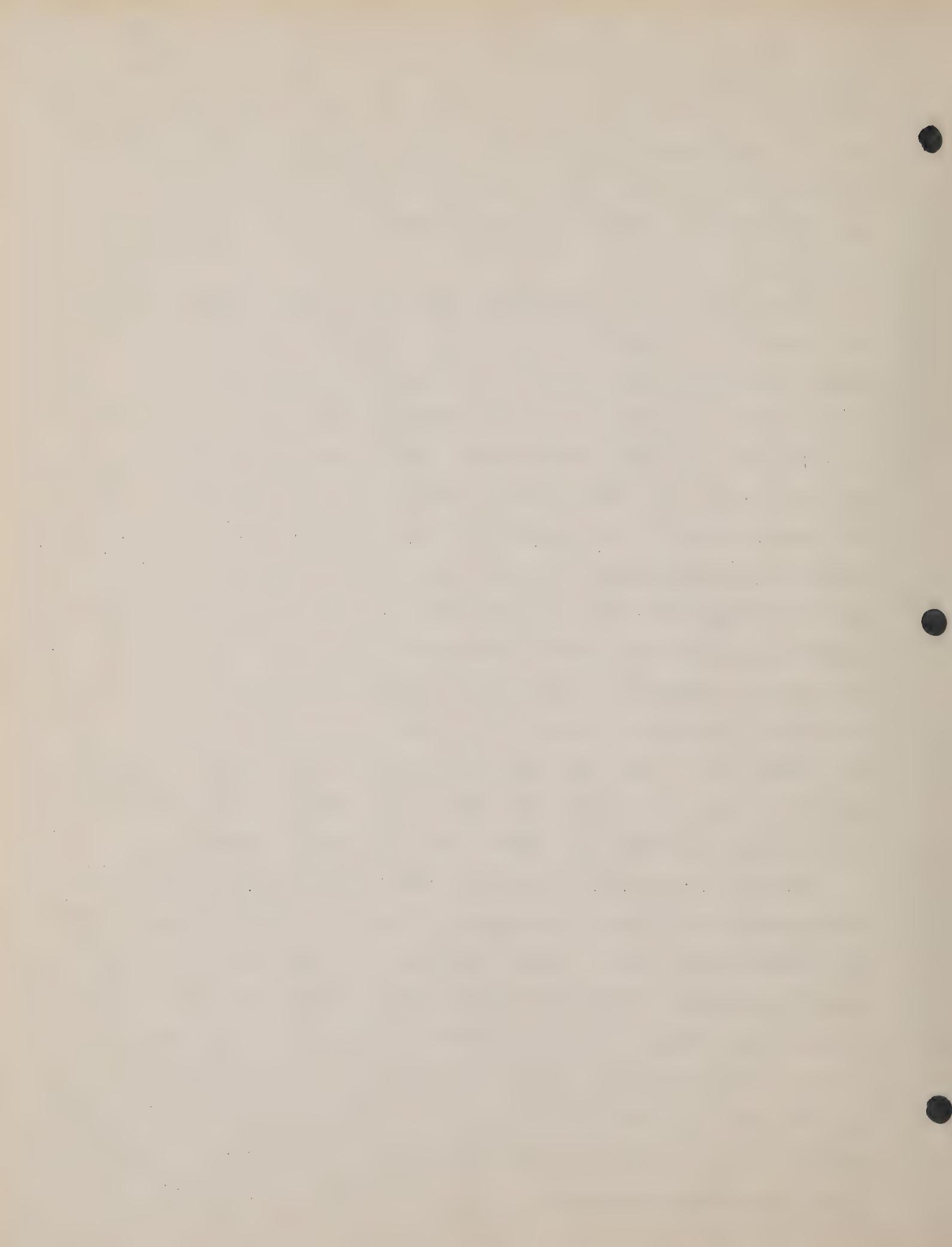
The very history of that tragedy is in need of elucidation. There is first the problem: How and when did the consciousness of salvation, i.e. the idea that the human being has the choice between either making the most of his life or wasting it, and that God's principal function is to direct him what to do to make the most of his life -- how and when did this idea begin to crystallize itself? Amos, Isaiah, Micah, Hosea and Jeremiah may perhaps be credited with having given the idea of salvation its first articulate expression in Israel. They felt the force of that idea so strongly that they insisted upon translating it immediately into public policy in matters of internal political and social import and in Israel's relation to other peoples. It is difficult to see how the application of their idea of salvation to the actualities of their day would have prevented Assyria, Egypt or Babylon from going on with their plans of invasion and conquest and ultimately destroying Israel. From the standpoint of Jewish survival it is fortunate that there developed simultaneously an isolationist tendency among the Kohanim and others who were followers of the Prophets. They were not content with a Torah of Yahweh that "was written upon the tablet of the heart." They literalized the conception of Torah and collected all such writings as would concretize the Torah as a means to salvation. Later Ezra, the scribes and Pharisees concentrated upon living according to that Torah as the instrument of national unity and individual self-fulfillment.



This of course meant that only Jews were in a position to achieve salvation, and the attainment of it thus became possible only for those identified with the Jewish people. The process which led to this isolationist conception of salvation shut the Jewish people up within itself, but it enabled it to meet with some ~~marked~~ measure of success the vicissitudes of fortune.

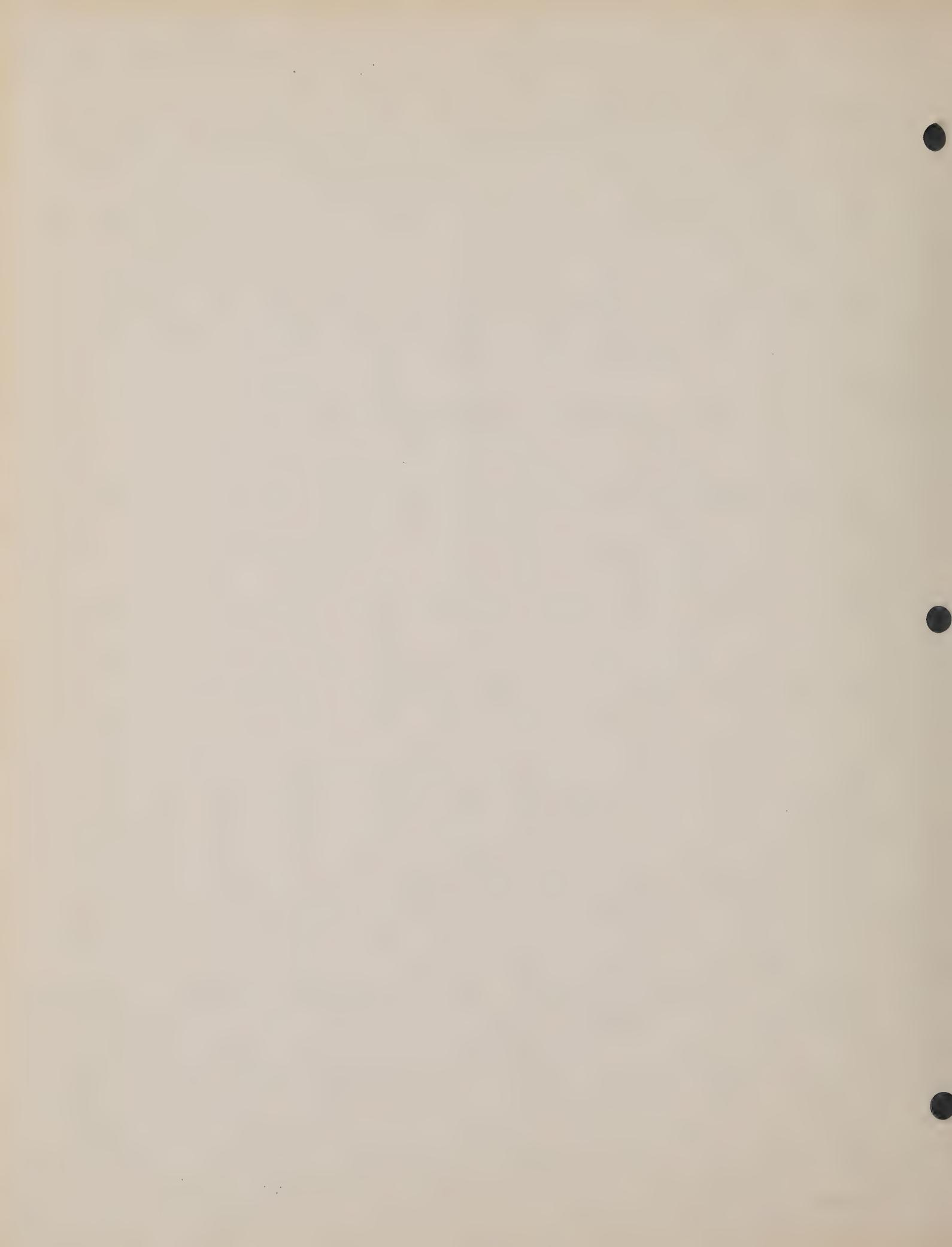
Among the Jews of the Second Commonwealth ~~markedly~~ these two tendencies were for the most part represented by two distinct groups. The urban population (the (p.277)) were soteric imperialists. The latter paid comparatively little attention to the Torah. They were fascinated by the elaboration of the cosmic scheme of redemption, a scheme in which the Jewish people occupied the central place. They had been exposed to the cultural influences of Zoroastrianism with its angelology and mythology based on the dualistic conception of reality. In that struggle for the possession of the world and man Satan and his cohorts were arranged against God and His hosts. At the head of these hosts was the Messiah. This belief helped the spiritual imperialists to define the place of Israel in the divine plan of redemption. Out of Israel was to come the human incarnation of the Messiah, the antagonist of Satan, and Israel was destined to combat and overthrow the human cohorts of Satan who constituted his earthly empire.

When the Temple was destroyed, the soterical imperialists were either killed off in the wars against Rome, or joined the various sects that broke away from the Jewish people. Of those sects the Christian was the foremost in carrying out successfully the policy of soterical imperialism. Paul, as Amisai brilliantly notes, was the Alexander the Great of the movement to Judaize the world. Alexander the Great hellenized the ancient world. His ambition took on the form of cultural imperialism. Paul Judaized the Roman world. His ambition took on the form of soteric imperialism.



The soterical isolationists under the leadership of the distinguished Pharisee Johanan ben Zakkai proceeded to ghettoize the Jewish people still further, and to concentrate on the Torah as a means to salvation both individual and collective. The isolationists could not escape, however, the challenge of the soteric imperialists -- the Christian Jews and other sectaries. In meeting that challenge they developed a passive kind of soteric imperialism. The Pharisaic scholars of the Torah found themselves compelled to engage in the study of cosmogony and theogony (p.278)

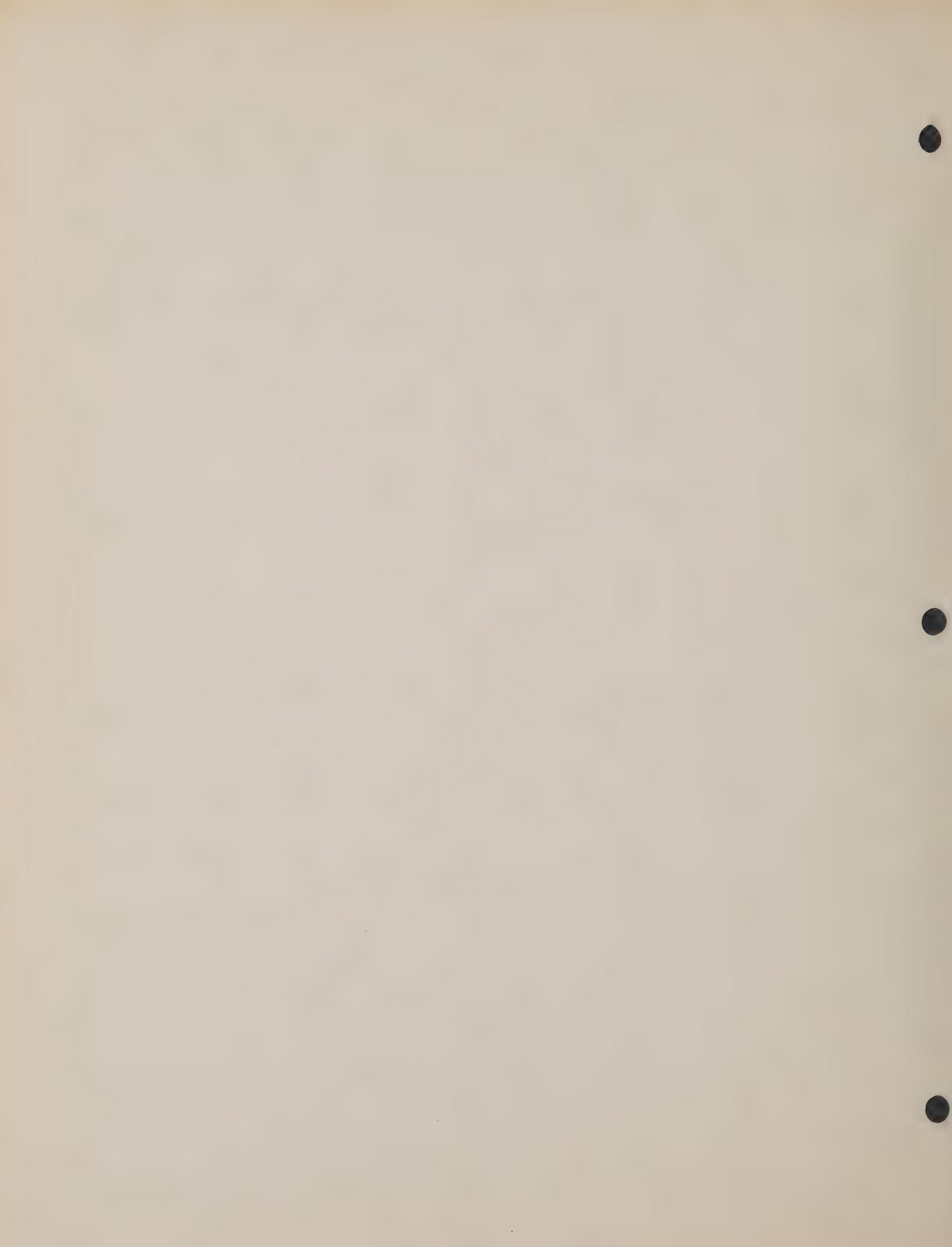
Some of them broke with Pharisaism as a result of such study or were mentally incapacitated by the inner conflict to which it led. R. Akiba the only one of four of the greatest scholars, managed to retain his mental equilibrium and his isolationism. Fortunately a new outlet for soteric imperialism, which could not be doomed, presented itself to the isolationist Tannaim and Amoraim. That too had to be of a passive character, but it came to figure very prominently in Jewish life. I refer to the development of Aggadah. The Halakah was devoted to fostering as much as possible the minutiae of observance of the laws in the Torah. The study itself of Halakah came to be regarded as an effective means to salvation. But in the luxurious growth of the Aggadah, especially in Palestine, where the isolationists had to meet the challenge of the soteric imperialists, we have a compensatory development to make up for the lack of a field of operation beyond their own people. The function of the Aggadah came to be that of defining Israel's place in the cosmic scheme of salvation despite its isolationist Torah. Rome, as prefigured by Esau, is, as in early soteric imperialism, the enemy of God and of Israel and the embodiment of Satanism. The Messiah who will emancipate Israel from the tyranny of Rome is for the most part merely a human descendant of David. But now and then there break through notions concerning the Messiah which originated in the circles of soteric imperialism.



When Kabbalah arose, a tour de force was attempted by those who had been too far committed to the Torah as the indispensable means to salvation. They attempted to convert the torah itself from an isolationist to an imperialist means to salvation. Instead of fostering cosmogony and theogony and the entire complex of Gnostic doctrine based on the struggle between God and Satan as something outside the Torah and antithetical to it, the Kabbalists hit upon the plan of interpreting the Torah itself in such a way as to have a vital bearing on these very teachings which dealt with the cosmic scheme of salvation. In the Safed school of Kabbalah, the general human interest in salvation gave way once again to the urgent need of saving the Jewish people from many a threatening danger. In Hasidism, Kabbalah became humanized once again, but the actual limitations of the world in which it developed, kept it once again confined to the redemption of the Jewish people.

With the advent of modernism into Jewish life the ancient conflict between the two tendencies became even more accentuated and has led as in ancient times to large defections from the Jewish people, and to attempt within the Jewish people either to pursue one tendency at the expense of the other or to synthesize the two. Thus we have the large mass of idealists who have broken with Judaism on the one hand and the various groupings within Jewish life itself viz the Reformist, the Orthodox, the Secularists and the Reconstructionists.

In the normative conception of salvation it is necessary to reckon with the fact that human life is lived on three different levels. 1) The level of organic needs; 2) the level of social needs; and 3) the level of spiritual needs. The satisfaction of the bodily hungers and needs is a prerequisite to health and to man's functioning normally as a social and spiritual being. Under the head of social needs are the need of belonging and serving as useful function. Among spiritual needs we include the need of loving and being loved, and the needs of



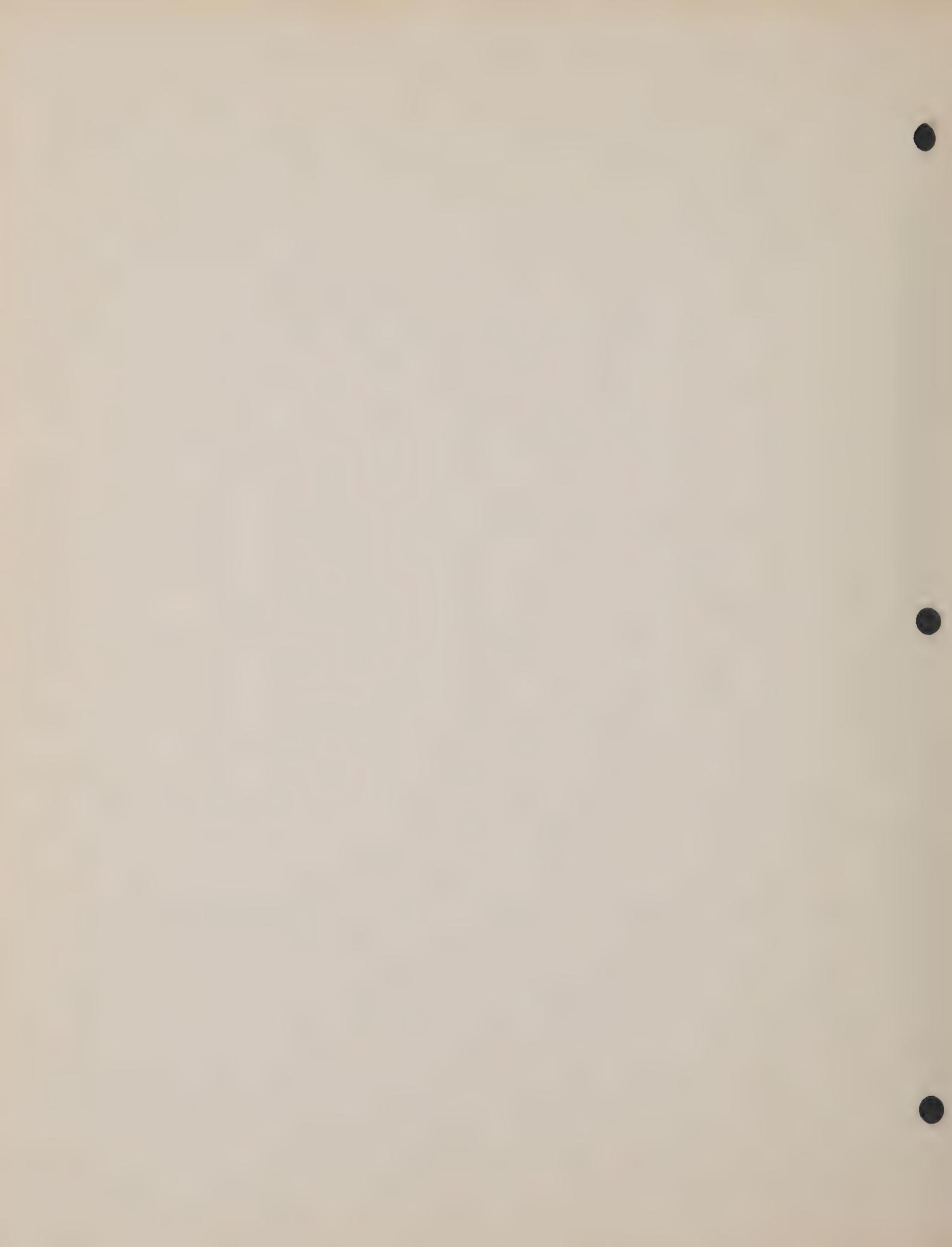
creativity and truth. In olden times there was a tendency to differentiate among human beings from the standpoint of these three levels of life. Plato based his Republic upon such a distinction. The Gnostics distinguished human beings into three groups corresponding to the three levels mentioned above (p.279)

Brahmanism with its caste divisions made analogous distinctions. In normative soterics no such sharp distinction between human beings could be countenanced. The reasons for repudiating such distinction emanate from the spiritual level of life and thought. To those who have attained that level of development to a considerable degree nothing is more repugnant than the tendency to impose distinctions on human beings on the basis of arbitrary criteria. While it is true that men differ in their capacities and therefore in their needs, we have no right to assume the absence of higher capacities and needs in persons without giving them an opportunity to indicate the possession of such capacities and needs.

The fact is that few people live on all the three levels simultaneously for any length of time. In normative soterics our main purpose is, in fact, to find ways and means of bringing about such economic and social conditions as would make possible continuous increase in the number of people living on the three levels of life simultaneously during ever increasing periods of time.

In the past there was the tendency to treat the third level of life as totally independent of the two, if not actually unachievable except as the other two levels are suppressed or reduced to a minimum.

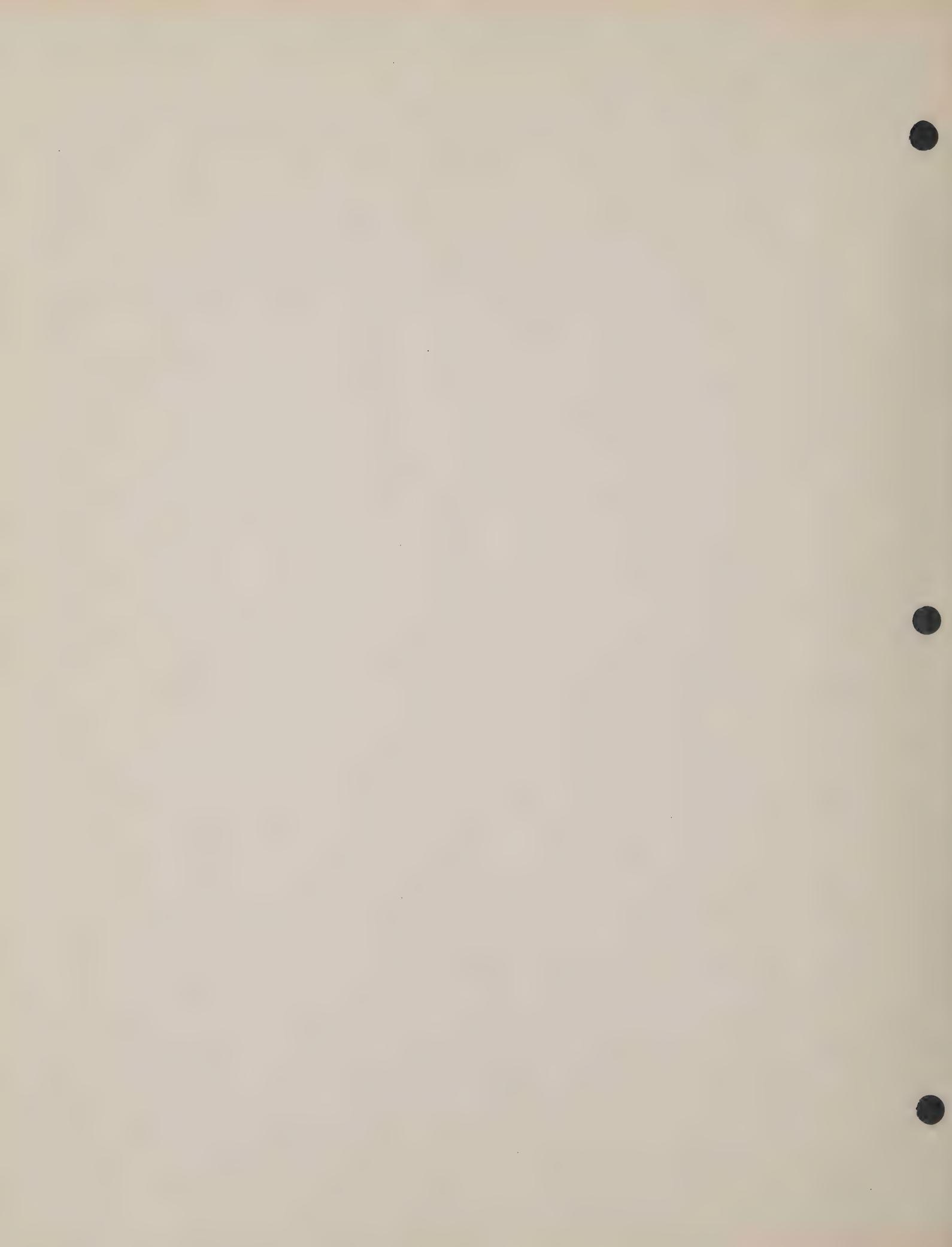
While it is true that to regard life on the first two levels as quite ~~more~~ adequate is contrary to human interests, to fail to provide for the needs which exist on those levels is certain to work mischief for human life as a whole. Modern soterics must concern itself with the problem of enabling every human being to achieve fulfillment on all the three levels of life.



Wed., Octo. 9, 1940

Those who have definitely broken with the theurgic approach to reality, the approach that is characteristic of traditional religion, find it hard to understand the writings of thinkers and philosophers who find it perfectly natural to articulate their deepest convictions in terms of Thomistic theology and metaphysics. If such persons come upon a work like J. Maritain's "Science and Wisdom," they are simply stumped by its entire cast of thought. Speaking, e.g. of the "true wisdom of eternal life," he makes the point that "Wisdom must give itself, must itself open the gates and descend from heaven. Here we have the peculiar mark of the true wisdom of eternal life. As it is a matter of entering into the depths of God, how would it be even conceivable if God Himself did not take the initiative with a free gift? (ibid 14)... The wisdom of salvation, the wisdom of holiness is not achieved by man but given by God. (It proceeds essentially not from an ascending movement on the part of the creature but from a descent of the creative Spirit... (p.16)... This is the law of the Incarnation (formulated by St. Thomas)... In the mystery of the Incarnation the descent of the divine plenitude into the depths of our human nature matters more than the ascent of human nature towards God." (p.19)

All of the foregoing is certain to sound to a modernist like a meaningless jargon. If he were provided, however, with the key thought of soterics, it could easily be transposed into intelligible language. That key thought is: The self-conscious experience of the will to salvation (the will to make the most out of one's life) is the meeting point of the Power not ourselves and ourselves. That meeting point is the source of our deepest religious and ethical insights. With this assumption in mind, one can understand what Maritain means by wisdom, and why he does not think it can be achieved by man but is given by God.

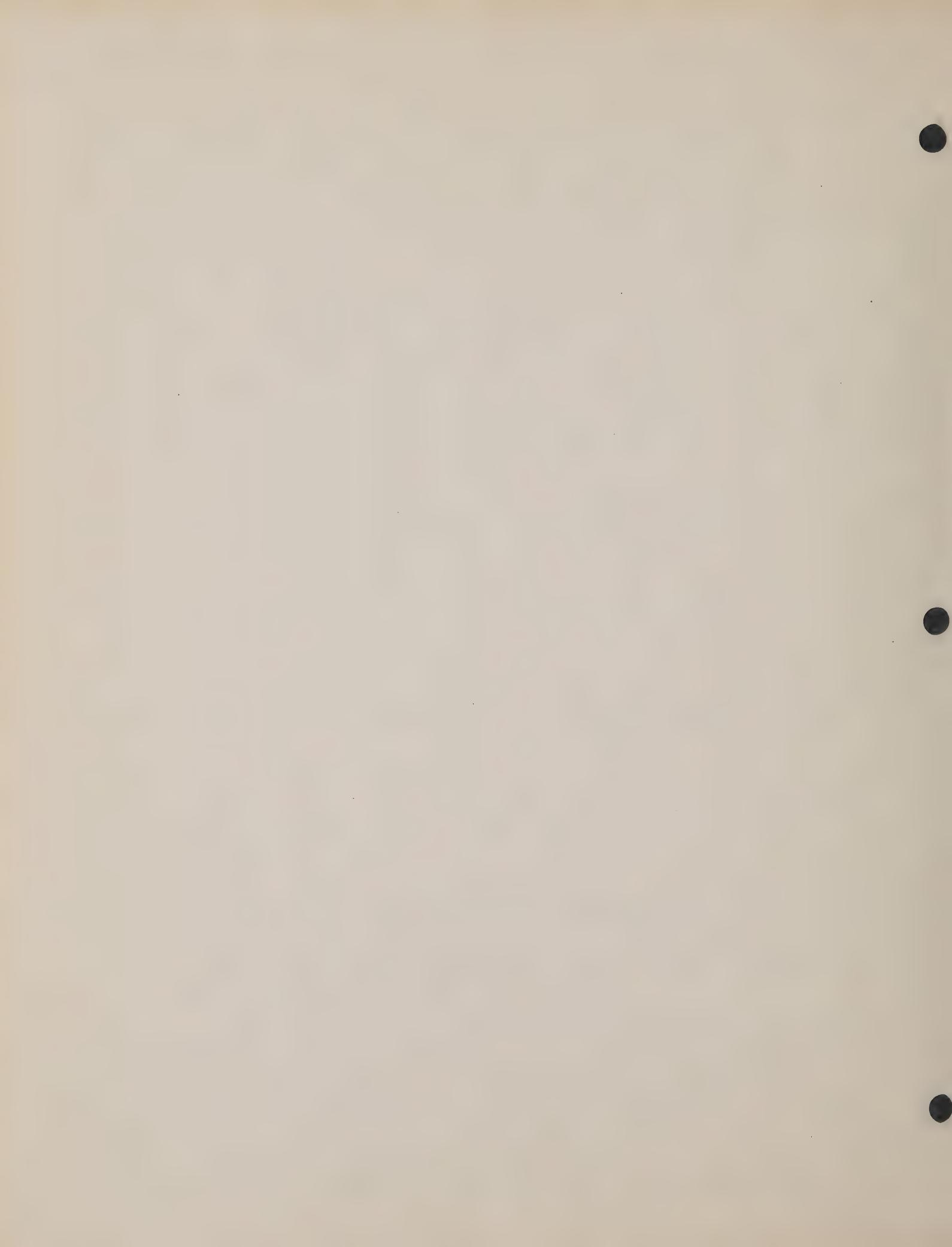


As far as the human being himself is concerned why should he really want to make the "most" out of his life, especially when to do so is bound up with hardship and frustration? As a matter of fact, the average human being is really contented to fulfill as much of his life as is included within the range of his own and immediate family's health, security and comfort and would not bother about the possibilities for the higher and more inclusive goods to which his life might contribute. The existence of three levels of salvation makes it possible for most human beings to content themselves with the attainment -- if that is possible -- of the two lower levels without straining for the highest level. There are some, however, who are satisfied with nothing less than achieving those values which come from the endeavor to make the most out of life in its deepest and most comprehensive sense. Yet it would be untrue to say that this urge which characterizes the few spiritually minded persons would ever be identified by them as entirely self-generated. On the contrary the very desire to establish the validity of this inner urge would impel them to ascribe that urge to a source outside themselves. Otherwise they would regard themselves as abnormal and freakish. This experience it is which the medievalists spoke of as the mystery of Incarnation and to which may be applied the above quoted principle of St. Thomas to the effect that the descent of divine plenitude etc. It also explains Maritain's own position which is stated in the following: "Humanism, yes, but a theocentric humanism an integral humanism, the humanism of the Incarnation" (ibid p. 78).

* * *

Thursday, Oct. 10, 1940

Stevenson is quoted as saying "Is there anything in life so disenchanting as attainment?" If this is true, it should have an important bearing on the meaning of salvation. Attainment to which Stevenson refers is attainment of a specific good for which one has been striving.

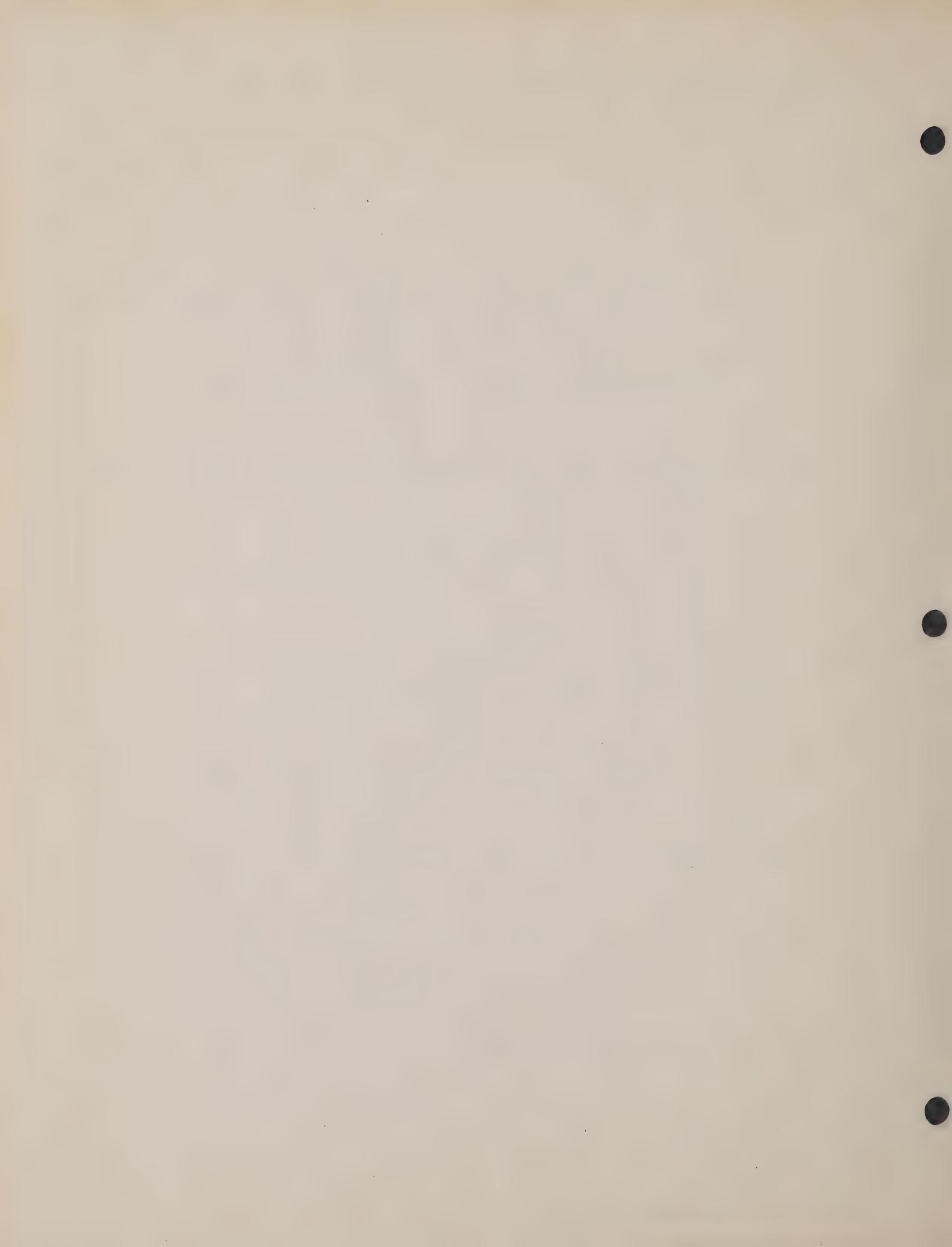


The disenchantment may of course be due to the fact that the good turns out to be less good when attained than it seemed while sought after. It is natural for the imagination to magnify the good we seek and for actual experience to reveal aspects of it when attained that we could not have known while seeking it. But assuming even that the good turned out as good and better than we had pictured it, would not its character as a good begin to waver after a little while? And would not that fact alone render it disenchanting? Moreover would not the lack of other goods begin so to preoccupy us as to seem to diminish the value of the attained good?

All this goes to prove that salvation cannot be identified with attainment or any static condition as such. This is the weakness of happiness as the goal of human life and explains why salvation cannot be identified with happiness. If salvation means making the most of one's life, there is no point which we can set up as the limit of attainment, for it is the nature of life, when self-aware, to believe itself in possession of unrealized potentiality. (p. 281)

This fact itself leads to two conclusions concerning the nature of salvation: 1) It is not the attainment of any particular good or of a combination of good, however inclusive, but rather the realization that one's life is being lived in such a way as to lead to the maximum utilization of potentialities for good in oneself. 2) It is, by reason of its comprehensive and dynamic character as well as by the intrinsic circumstance that the full utilization of one's potentialities is unthinkable without social heritage, cooperation and future, essentially a social and not an individual goal.

Both of these facts about salvation should be brought within focus of our introspection when we contemplate our own will to salvation, for they not only direct our attention to the conditions attending its progressive attainment but make us more fully aware of the kind of Power it is that makes for salvation.



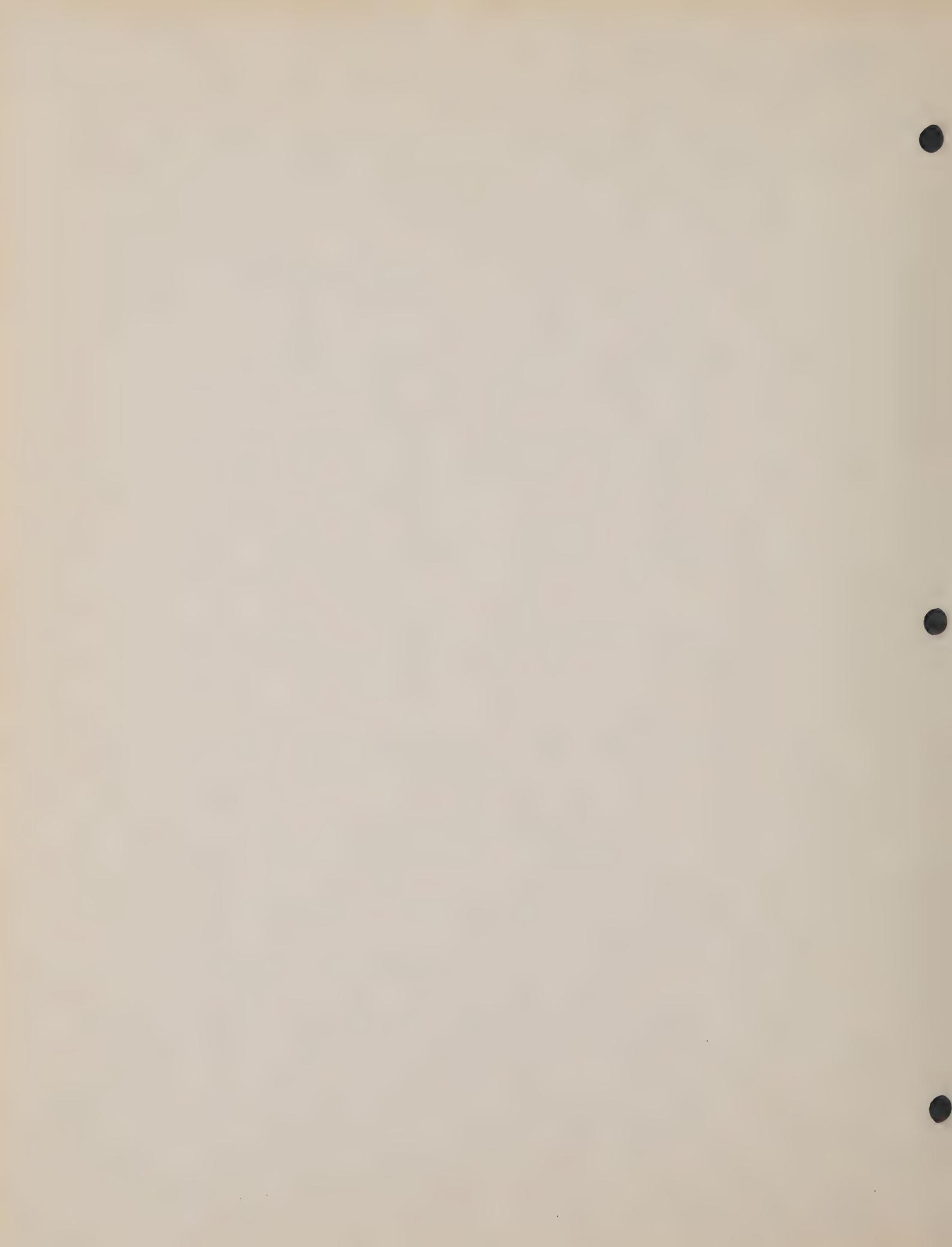
Sunday, Oct. 13, 1940

~~Time~~

The sermon on "Taking God to Task" which I preached on the first day of Rosh Hashanah and the one on "The Defects of Our Virtues" which I preached yesterday were very successful. In the RH sermon (see p.267) (Sept. 21) I developed the thought expressed by H. thouse in ~~Secular~~ Social Devpt. p. 334: If humanity as a collective whole had throughout recorded history had nothing but its own betterment in view and had achieved only what we see, we might well despair." I applied that thought to the history of religion, philosophy, science, education, philanthropy and social revolution, and pointed out that practically all those endeavors have always aimed at the attainment of power and not the establishment of justice and peace. The prophet's exhortation "Cease to do evil and learn to do well" has gone unheeded. Justice I defined as being that equality which means equal obligation to give the best one is capable of and equal claim to getting what would enable me to give that best. Furthermore the same rule of equality applies to cultural groups, on the principle of diversity in unity, as the only just principle of human society.

In the introductory part of the sermon I made the point(which deserves elaboration) that we should differentiate in our tradition the prophetic from the poetic representation of God. In the liturgy we have the poetic representation. In order to know that it is such and to read in that light, we should come to it with the prophetic representation well in mind.

Yesterday I developed the meaning of "sin" as any thought, feeling or action that tends to destroy the sense of life's worthwhileness or the belief in God. The sins that vitiate our virtues do more harm than outright crimes and immoralities. They fall into three categories: 1) (p.282) missing the mark; 2) crookedness - rationalization; and 3) rebellion -- Marxism-Nietzschanism. The first kind vitiates love, patriotism, compassion, justice; the second is the misapplication of

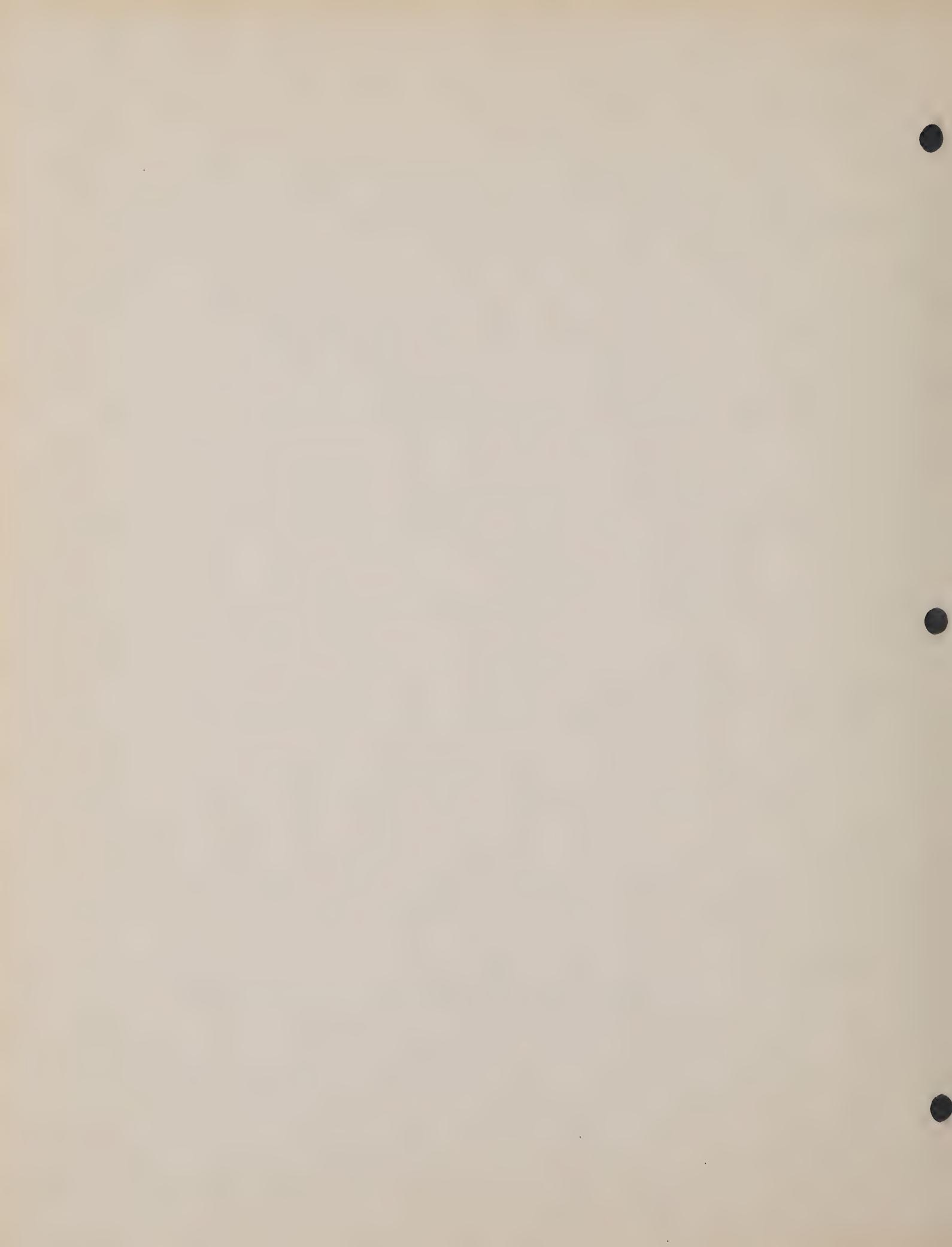


reason, and the third is the modern sin vitiates the ideal of world betterment.

Finky has lots of secretaries and he keeps on sending me letters nearly all of which begin with the stereotype "I deeply appreciate" and end with "warm regards." But every now and then I get a note from him which is like the rattle of a poisonous snake warning that he is going to strike. I received such a note last Thursday saying I should come to see him to talk over some matters pertaining to the Seminary and Teachers Institute. Although he apologized for annoying me at this time when he knew I was so busy, and implied that the appointment could wait till next week or so, I was too agitated and wanted to have it over with.

The first matter was about the Friedlaender classes. He claimed that the expenditure of \$4500 per annum for 100 students (both of which figures I suspect to be false) was not warranted in view of the very elementary character of the work done. I myself have for the longest time been sceptical of the value of those classes, at least not to the extent of battling for them against opposition which had been growing during the last ten years, due I suspect, to Finky's persistent effort to undermine Chipkin's influence. When, therefore, he said he would suggest that a committee be appointed to look into the work of the Friedlaender Classes I could not honestly oppose such a suggestion, although I took care to state that I was not sure that the Friedlaender classes deserved to be eliminated.

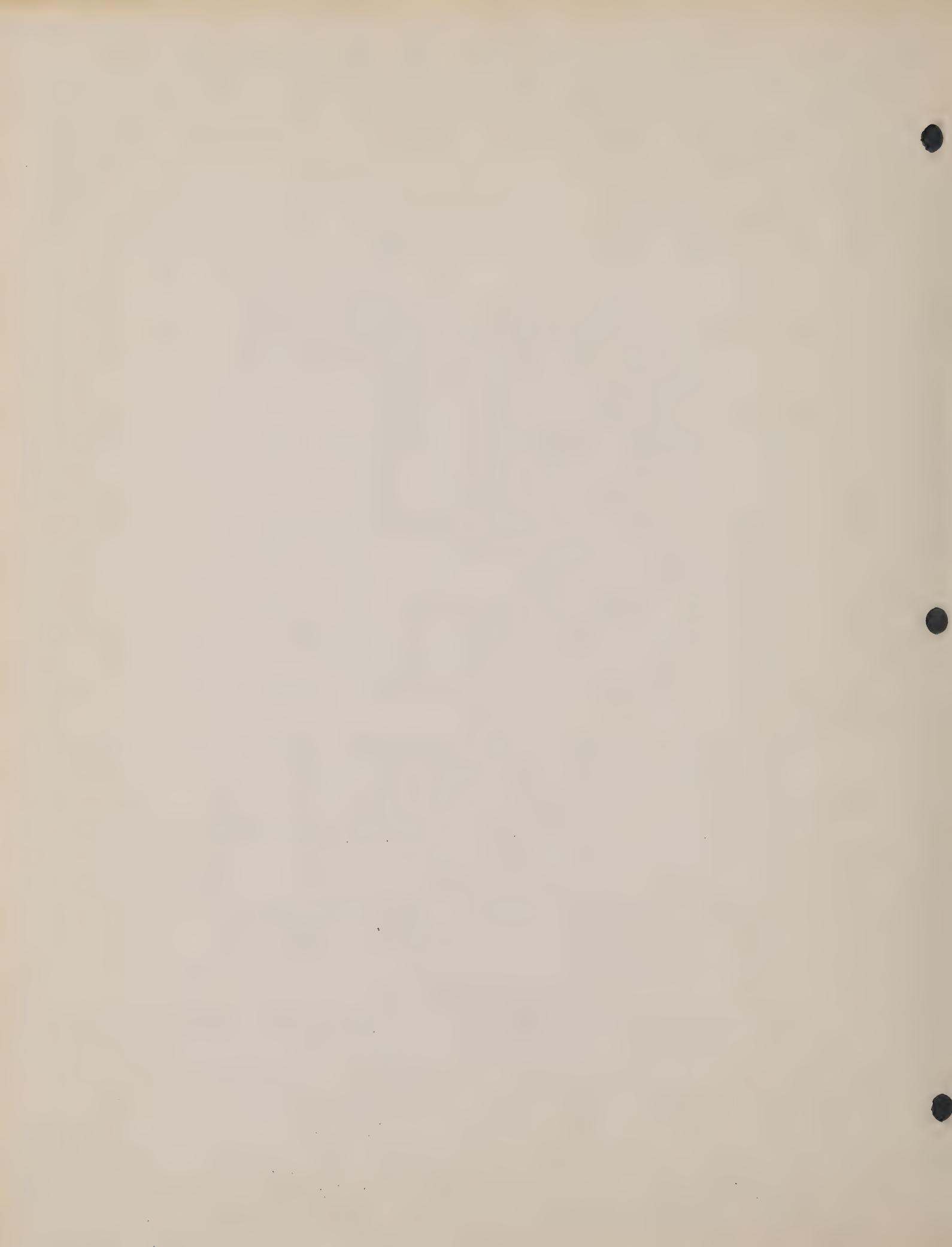
When he was through with that matter, he proceeded to introduce the next one which he described as a "very delicate one." I knew at once that he was going to suggest something vicious. Like the snakes that cover their victims with slime before they begin to devour them. Finky emits a slimy froth of irrelevant sophistries before he comes out with what he is after. This time his preface began with a remark which



he quoted Dr. Honor as having made to him about two years ago at a banquet given by the Teachers Institute alumni in Dr. Honor's honor. The remark was that only the older classes were represented. This, according to Finky, meant that in the early years I was in contact with the students, whereas in the later years I have permitted, as he put it Dinin to get ~~mix~~ between me and the students. He gave himself as an example of having prevented Adler to get close to the students. Moreover Dinin was doing altogether too much work. He ought to give up the work as registrar. The upshot of all this is that I should take over the job of registrar -- which, of course, would mean a saving of about \$1000 to \$1500. I asked him how his consideration for Dinin who he thought had been doing too much work squared with his willingness to pile more work on me. Out of that he tried to wriggle by pretending that the last thing he wanted to do was to pile work on me. The secretary would attend to the details. Then he proceeded with a song and dance about what it means to have an efficient secretary. And so leaped from one sophistry to another like a nimble monkey leaping from one tree to another.

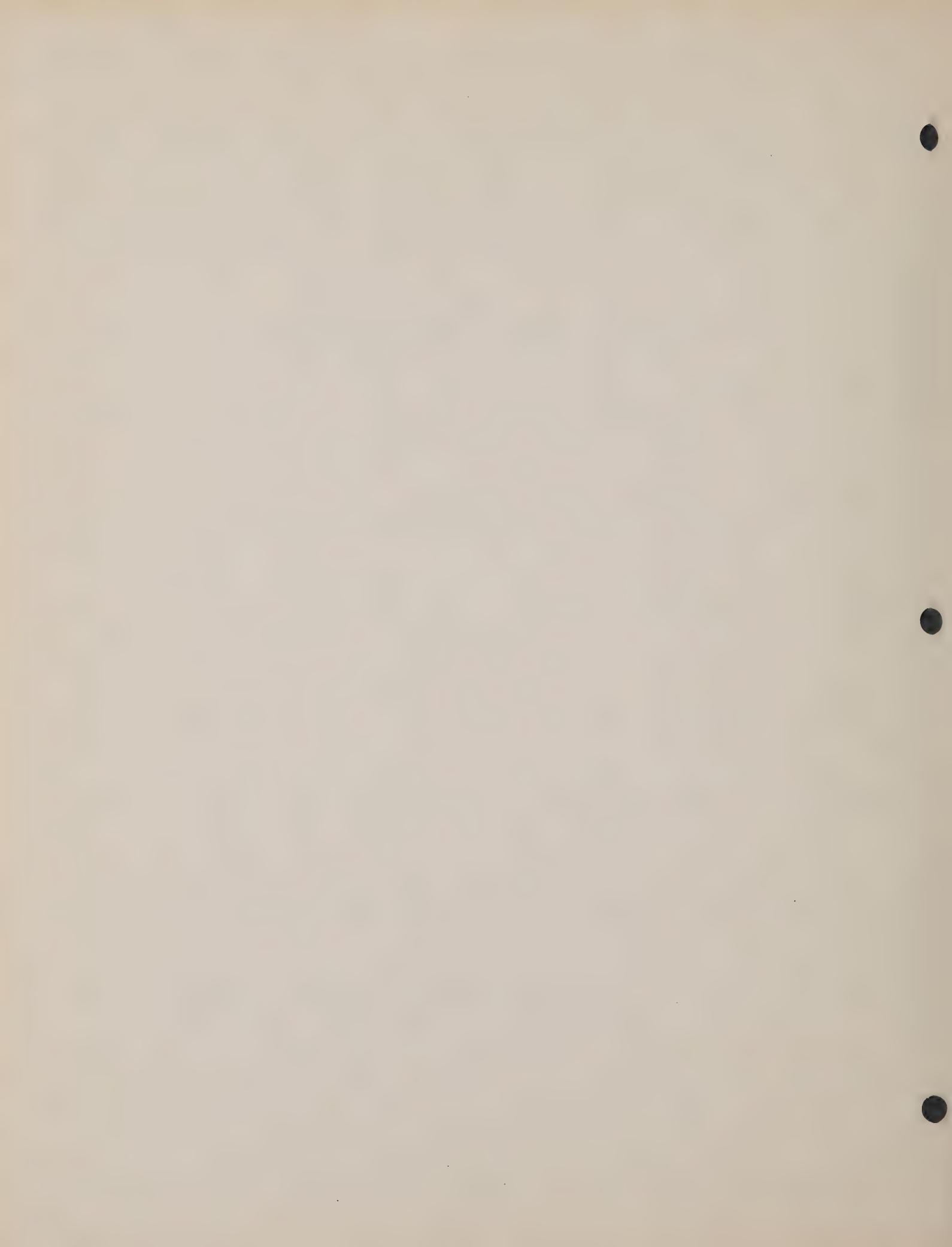
Fortunately I was able to control myself and to display no sign of resentment. I told him firmly that I am doing ten hours of actual teaching a week and cannot think of taking up more administrative duties. But I doubt whether I am through with him. It seems that I am destined to have him on my neck all the time. He even expressed the wish to take part in faculty meetings of the Teachers Institute.

At the meeting of the SAJ Board of Trustees last Monday night I succeeded in getting their consent to set aside one eighth of the money that would be contributed in response to the Kol Nidre night appeal by Ira. This means that the Seminary will get over \$1200. But instead of appreciation I get the kind of treatment described above. Finky knew about this resolution of the SAJ Board but that did not prevent him from suggesting to me that I take over Dinin's job as registrar.



The real tragedy of Jewish life is not in the maltreatment at the hands of the non-Jews but in the complete lack of purpose and content; and the worst of it is that I have never come across a single Jew, even among the most scholarly and loyal, that is aware of this lack. How that is the case is beyond my understanding, yet there it is, as if all the furies had combined to render the Jewish people absolutely stupid and oblivious of what is happening to its soul.

The foregoing fact struck me recently with unprecedented force when I compared the activities of Jewish Education Committee in behalf of propaganda for Jewish education with those in behalf of creating educational content. A few days ago I received by mail a large variety of propaganda literature with all kinds of ingenious devices, leaflets, buttons and what not appealing to parents to send their children to Jewish schools and to children to get their playmates to join them in attending such schools. (It is the ~~task~~ trick of using makeup and spotlight effects to produce the illusion of beauty.) On the other hand, last Thursday night there was a meeting of some of the leading Jewish educators, including myself, trying hard and failing to find the basic principle for the building of a curriculum for the Jewish school. Dushkin had suggested having the teaching material organized around four social concepts: the home, the synagogue and the community, the Jewish people with its center in Palestine, and humanity and the world. After four hours of discussion we all realized that we haven't even the beginnings of what to give to children or young people. So that this business of telling people about our glorious heritage is all bunk. We certainly cannot expect children to take up the study of Talmud or Midrash even in the very fine translation gotten out by the Soncino publishers. Even the Bible is a closed book, unless accompanied by all kinds of commentaries and interpretations. As for the teaching of history, how much of that can really serve as an inspiration or guide



to a worthwhile kind of life? We may be very clever as salesman, even when we haven't anything to sell, but when it comes to making good our claims, we are not there. It doesn't even occur to our leaders that this kind of self-humbug is costing us dearly, and is avenging itself by inflicting on us self-contempt and self-hate in the worst form.

An additional proof of the inexorable will to salvation (see p. 261 Sept. 8) is the case of Brahmanism and Buddhism, both of which set out with the assumption that life as such is inherently worthless and irredeemable. That being the case one would expect that Hindu religion would advocate suicide. Instead of which it declares suicide one of the cardinal sins and punishable by the soul's transmigration into some inferior beast. In other words, the will to make the most out of life is so potent that it is satisfied to be logically self-contradictory only to attain its objective.

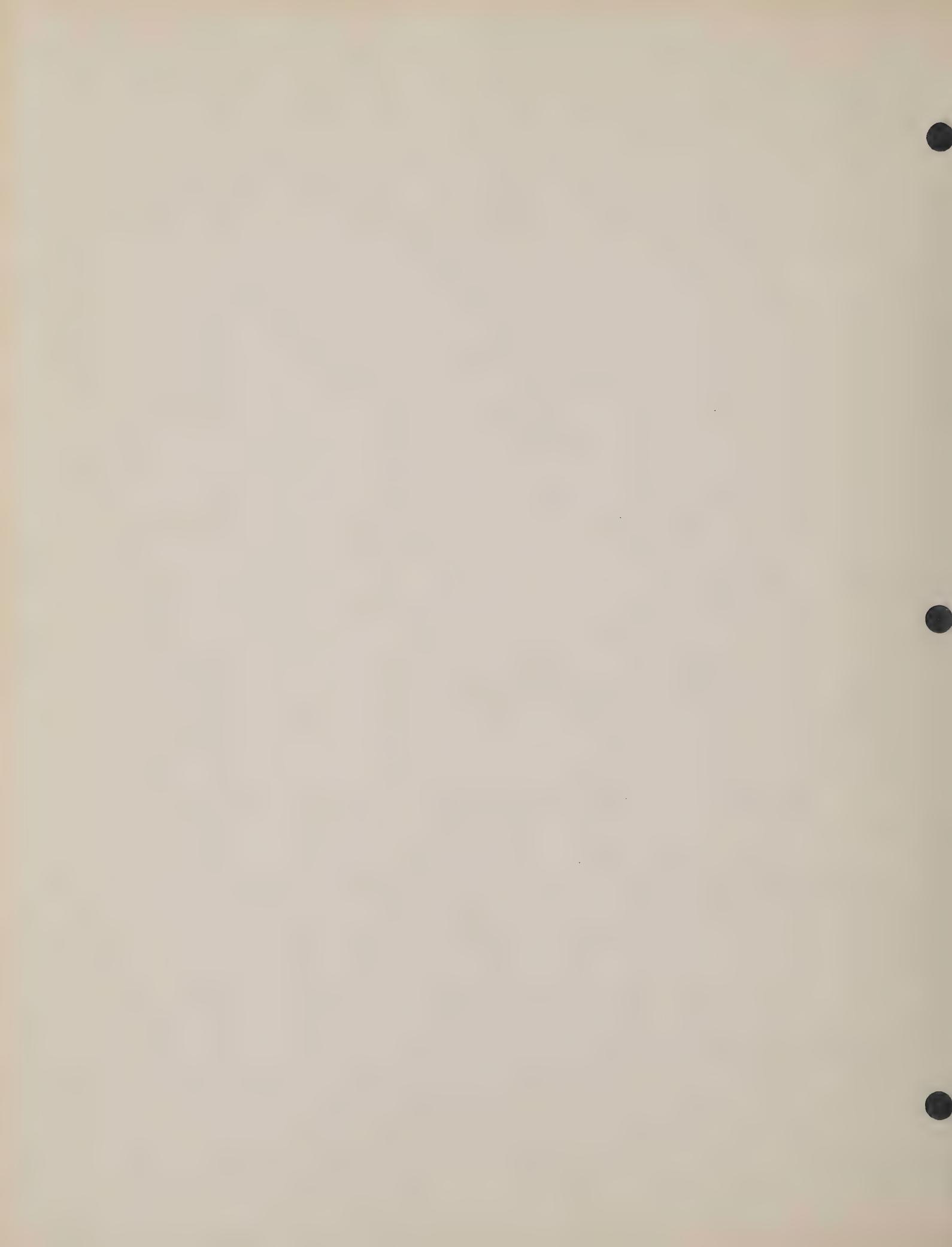
The heart of the problem in soterics is: what constitutes making the most of one's life. However much we may disagree with Max Striver's and Nietzsche's nihilism and transevaluation of values, we must have something more convincing to counter their assumptions than mere invective.

It may also be that the three categories of sin: missing the mark (not enough and too much), crookedness (rationalization) and rebellion (affirming the will to Power as the norm of human life) furnish us the clue to what's wrong with most conceptions of salvation. (see p. 282, Oct. 13)

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Monday, October 14, 1940

I see that Gabirol's philosophy is based on the method of introspection described above. Amisai says: (p.284)



Tuesday, Oct. 15, 1940

The difference between the will to live and the will to salvation (=to make the most out of life) corresponds to the difference between consciousness and self-consciousness or breathing and breathing hygienically. The term religion should for the sake of clarity be confined to the manifestation of the will to salvation.

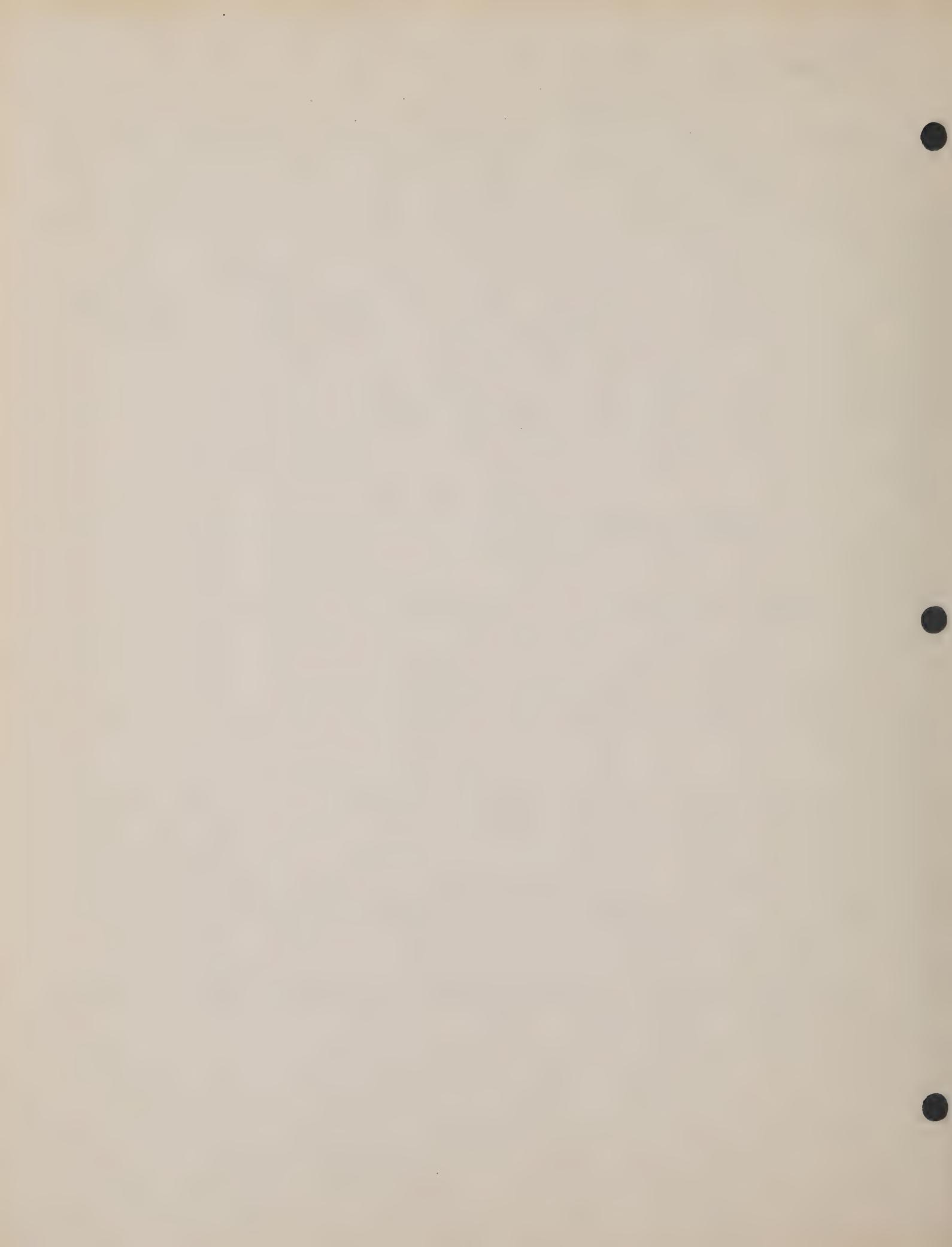
To determine objectively what constitutes salvation we must make sure that we have the following: 1) an objective and not a perverted standard of values; 2) a true and not a false (rationalized) dialectic, and 3) a correct and not an erroneous interpretation of history. These therefore are the three criteria of true soteric religion.

Are health, economic opportunity and human dignity constituents of salvation or the means to it? When a person maintains his health, is engaged in satisfying work that gives him a comfortable livelihood and he manages to cultivate his ethical and esthetic traits to a degree commensurate with his character and taste, can he be said to have actually achieved salvation or to be favorably conditioned from the standpoint of salvation? In other words, is happiness which a person who is thus situated may be said to possess the same as making the most of his life or merely an indication that he does so? I am inclined to believe that happiness is not the same as salvation, but generally an index of it as well as a prerequisite to it. Unhappiness necessarily implies that there is some area in the person's life that is not productive of good. By implication therefore such a person is not getting or making the most out of his life.

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Wednesday, Oct. 16, 1940

The difficulty we encounter in formulating the meaning of salvation or maximum life is not due to ignorance which might in time be overcome. That difficulty is inherent in the limitations of the human mind which is unable it seems by its very nature to have first hand knowledge of ultimates at either end of any process. We shall probably never know what life, electricity, mind or energy is. All we can know is that they represent different modes of reality and under what conditions they operate. The same appears to be true of ultimate termini such as self, personality, God, maximum life. We know them to represent attainments of reality, but we cannot describe them except by means of the factors, agencies and conditions that contribute to their realization.

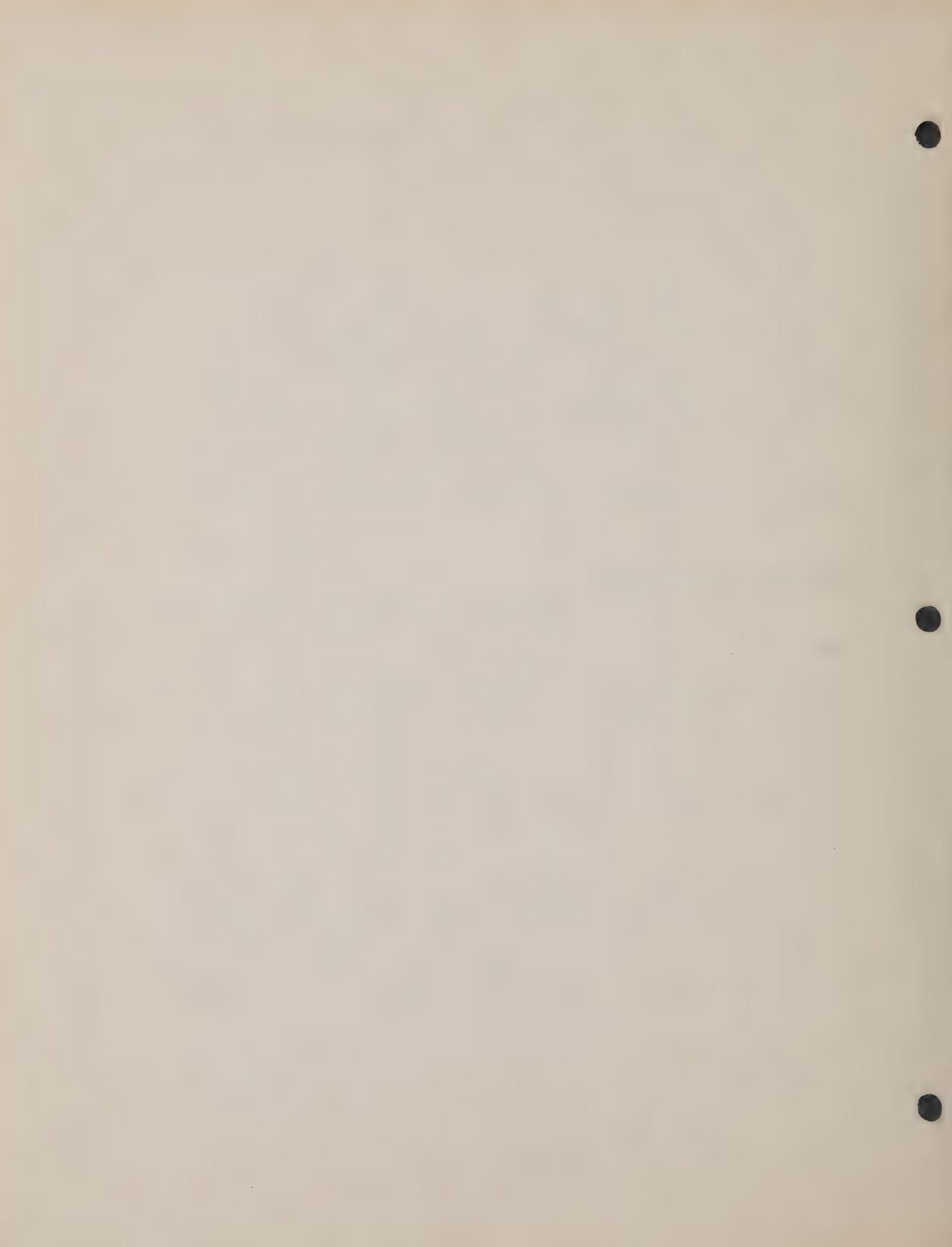
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Thursday, Oct. 17, 1940

How much confused thinking it is necessary to disentangle when dealing with the problem of standard of values is brought home to us by the following facts: 1) It is generally assumed that the Judeo-Christian tradition is responsible for the hegemony which western civilization is supposed to ascribe to the conscience in matters of conduct; 2) the conscience is supposed to counteract the will to power; 3) Nietzsche, on the basis of these two assumptions sets himself up as the arch immoralist in proclaiming the gospel of the will to power and denouncing both the Judeo-Christian tradition and the conscience as expressing the will to the denial of life; 4) Along comes a thinker like T. V. Smith, and in his "Beyond Conscience" proves that conscience -- and the implication is that also the Jedo-Christian tradition -- is merely a rationalization of the will to power; 5) He therefore draws the conclusion that if mankind is to survive it will have to adopt the Buddhist standard of values which provides the only method of eliminating from conscience the will to power which it camouflages.



Thus Nietzsche and T. V. Smith (or Buddhism) are antipodal in their notions as to the standard of values by which we are to measure salvation. But their positions at least are clear. In what light shall we view the Judeo-Christian tradition and its heir, the modern advocacy of conscience? To maintain that both are deliberate, or even unintentional, organizations of hypocrisy would be to repeat the mistake of the 18th century illuminati who decried religion as a fraudulent conspiracy of the ~~priesthood~~ priesthoods. The truth probably is that the Judeo-Christian tradition and the modern philosophical reinterpretation of it represent the attempt to achieve a synthesis between the two antipodal standards of value: the one based on the will to power and the other based on the negation of power. The inconsistencies and hypocrisies which mark that tradition and its modern successor indicate that so far they have fallen between the two stools of East and West instead of combining them into an operative synthesis.

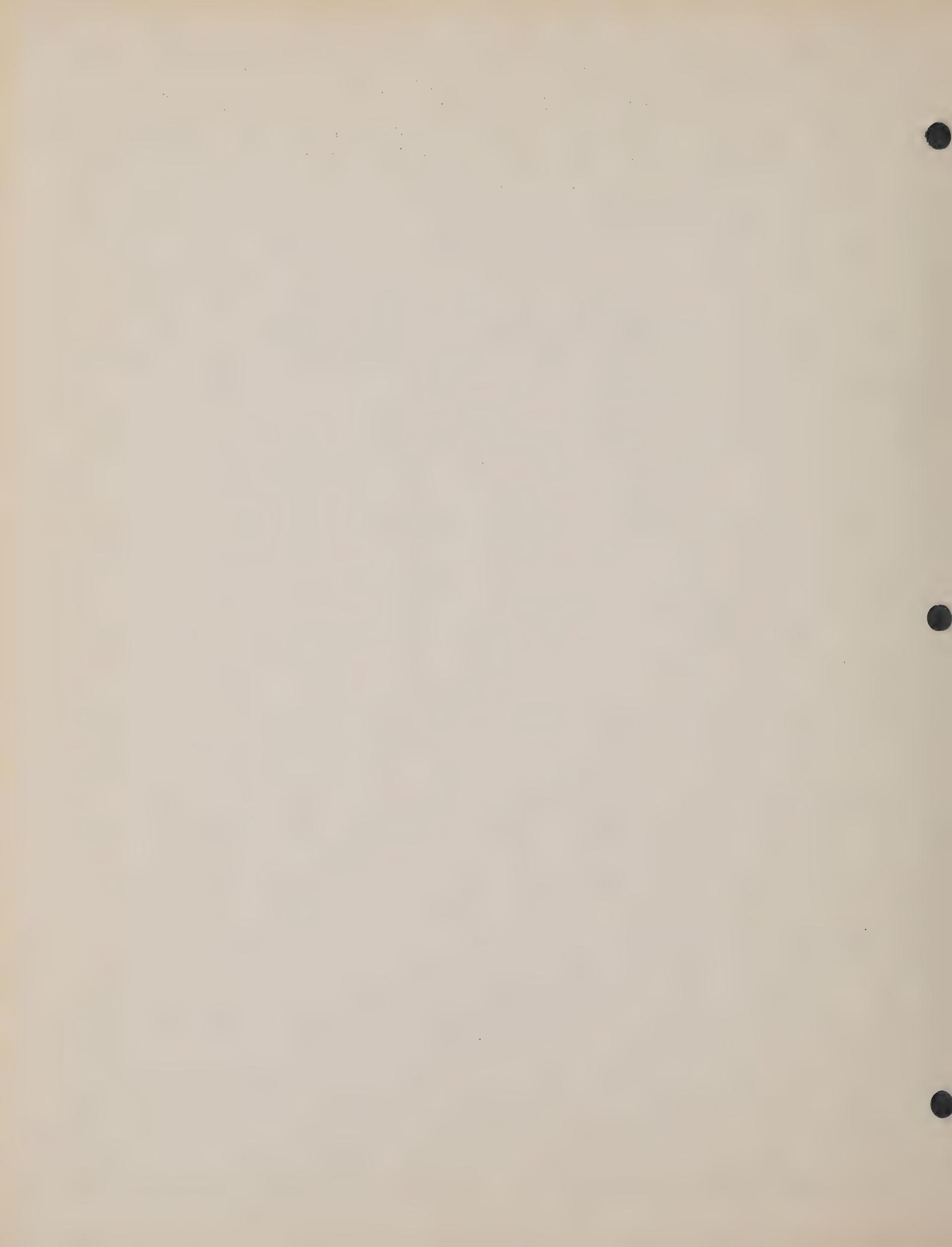
The awareness of all this points to the following conclusions:

- 1) that if there is to be one objective standard of values, it is likely to be one in which regard is had to the principle of polarity in that both the will to power and its antithesis the denial of power are somehow made to live together; and 2) that it is necessary to reconstruct the Judeo-Christian tradition on other lines than those which substituted the conscience for the authority of tradition.

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Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1940

In the famous interview between Napoleon and Laplace, in which Napoleon is said to have asked Laplace whether in his astronomical researches he had come upon any evidences of the existence of God might well have been duplicated if Napoleon had interviewed Watson the behaviorist and had asked him whether in his study of man he had discovered evidence of ego as personality. In the same way as Laplace replied,



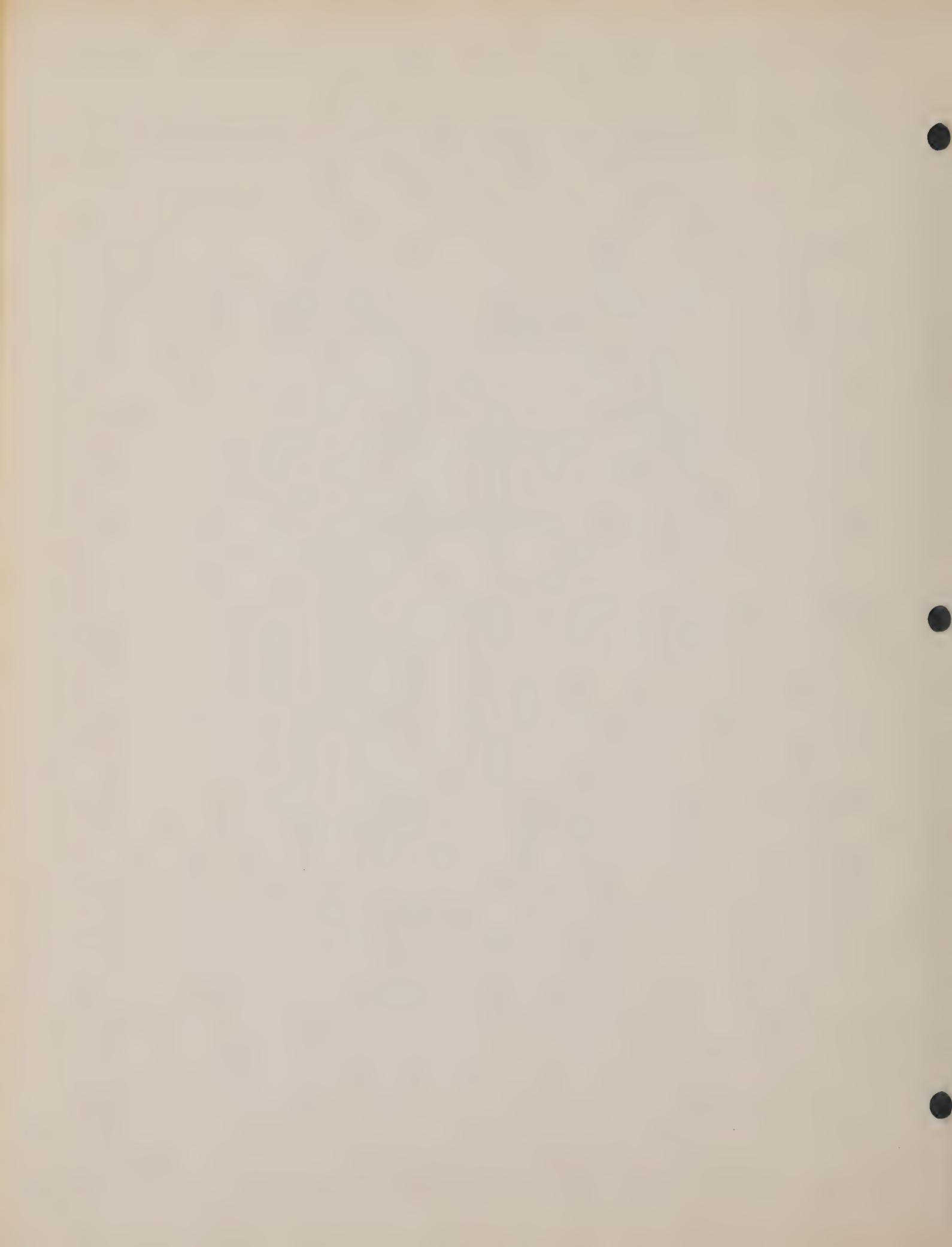
"Sire, I found no need for any such hypothesis," referring to the existence of God. Watson would undoubtedly have answered that he had had no occasion to assume the existence of ego or to discover any evidences of it.

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Wednesday, Oct. 23, 1940

The ancients assumed that salvation consisted in achieving self-identification or union with God. Such self-identification or union meant the transcendence of sin and mortality which are inherent in our humanity and the taking on of perfection and immortality which are the attributes of godhood. This ancient notion of salvation has its psychological equivalent in the modern man's tendency to transcend the evil in life by adopting the divine perspective, *sub specie aeternitatis* or more simply the long range view. Utilizing the imagery of space, Thomas Hardy in "The Dynasts" surveys the vast panorama of the Napoleonic wars not with the eyes of the soldiers and statesmen who participated in those wars, nor yet with his own eyes as the author of the poem, but with the eyes of the gods, or destinies inhabiting the outer rims of space. "The historian Robinson helps us to achieve this larger or divine perspective by utilizing the imagery of time. If an hour were to represent the period of man's existence on earth," he says, "only the last minute of that hour would represent what may be termed the era of civilization. This would certainly cure us of our sense of despair at the apparently incorrigible nature of human life.

There is more to the modern man's effort to overcome despair by this method of long range perspective than appears on the surface. Basically, it is an expression of the will to live in the face of misery which is entirely of man's own doing and which is so tragically superfluous. How could we have the courage to go on living if we were to conclude on the basis of the apparently unalterable charac-

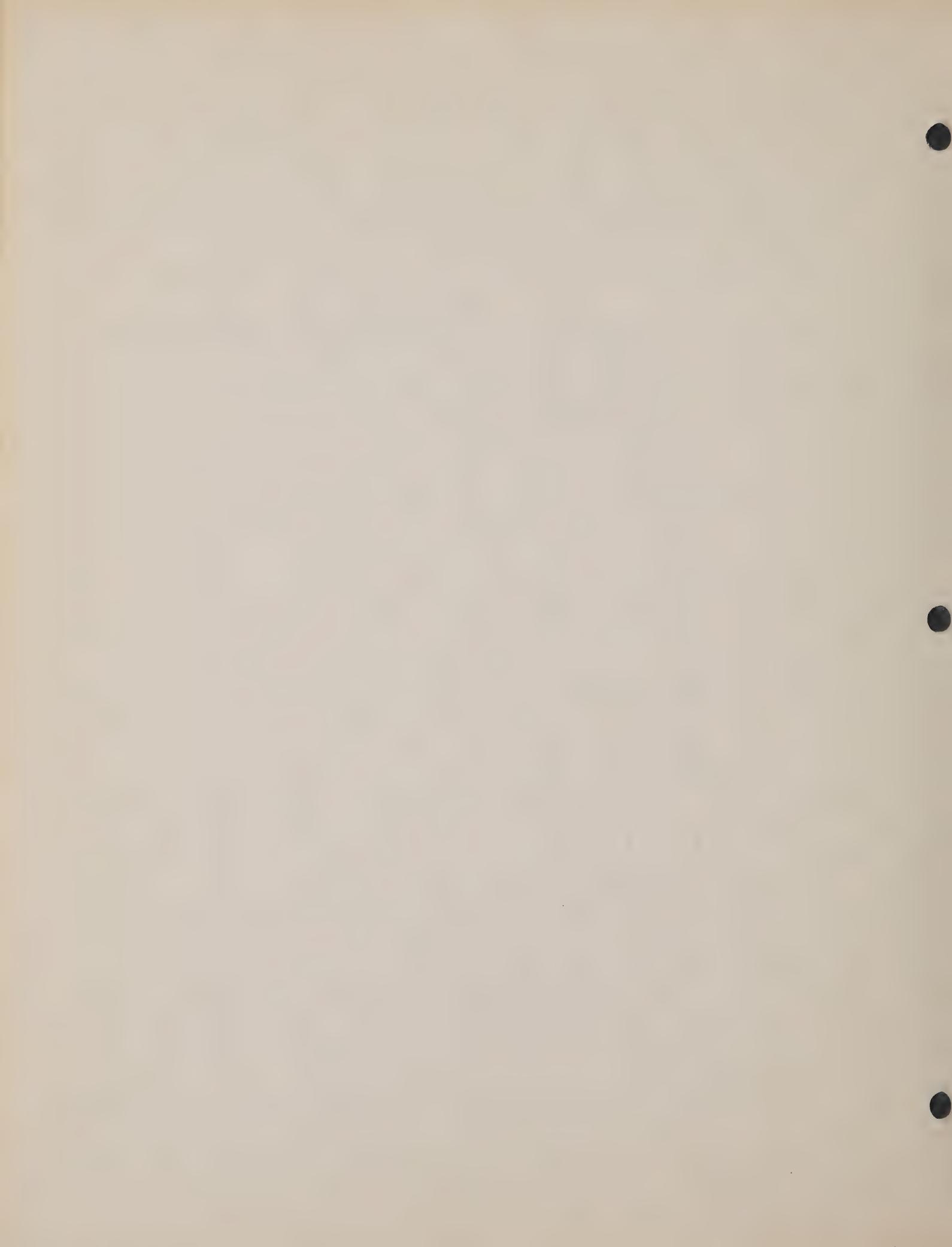


ter of human life, that there is no likelihood of a better future for our children or even our children's children. The resort to the "divine perspective is more than a figure of speech. It is an actual self-identification with the Power not ourselves, that takes place whenever we rise above the immediate and we view the cosmos from a viewpoint far beyond our own bodies in time and space.

We are bound to miss the full significance of the striving for salvation if we identify it merely with the maximum attainable goods. Maximum life is not necessarily limited to the attainment of outward goods. If we succeed in holding on to life in the face of suffering, without surrendering to despair, we also manage to achieve life abundant. Even if that suffering becomes unbearable and we perish, we can actually attain maximum life by making of our death a redemptive agency in the life of the race. This is the truth in the doctrine of vicarious atonement and of salvation through martyrdom. In order however that our death be the attainment of salvation, our life must be dedicated to the love of mankind. It must be a life depicted in Isaiah as that of the suffering servant, which it can be if it is lived in a spirit of saintliness, or as visioned by Shelley in his "Prometheus Unbound" which it can be if it is lived in devotion to truth and enlightenment.

In a world in which life is fairly tolerable, salvation is naturally measurable in terms of positive goods which we succeed in securing, goods on the level of organic needs, of acquired habits and of creative urge. But a world in which life is as intolerable as it is today, salvation must consist in the strength and courage which qualify one for martyrdom.

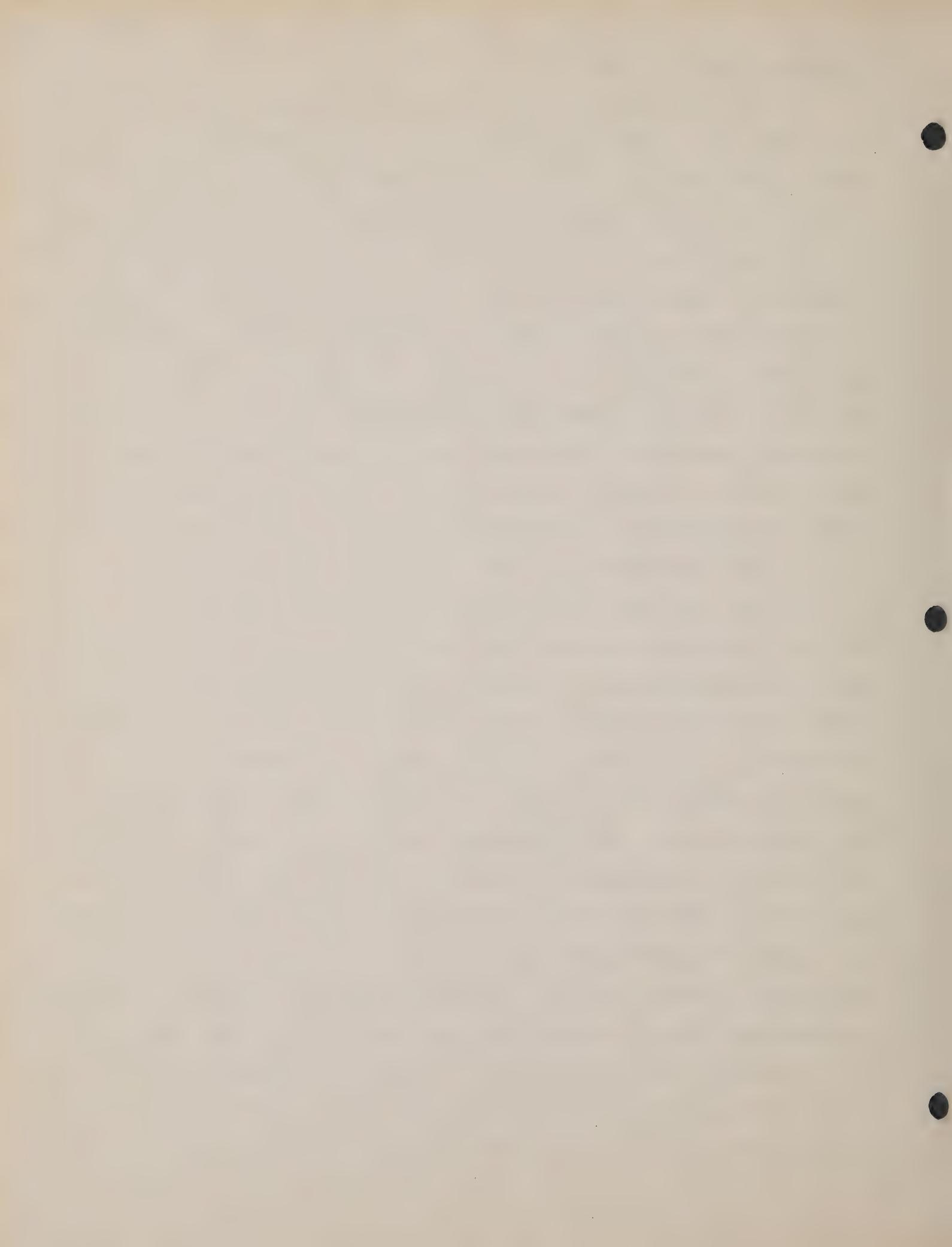
Paul's "We glory in tribulation etc." represents a more relevant and urgent conception of salvation for our day than any of the utopian dreams in which we have been indulging.



Thursday, Oct. 24, 1940

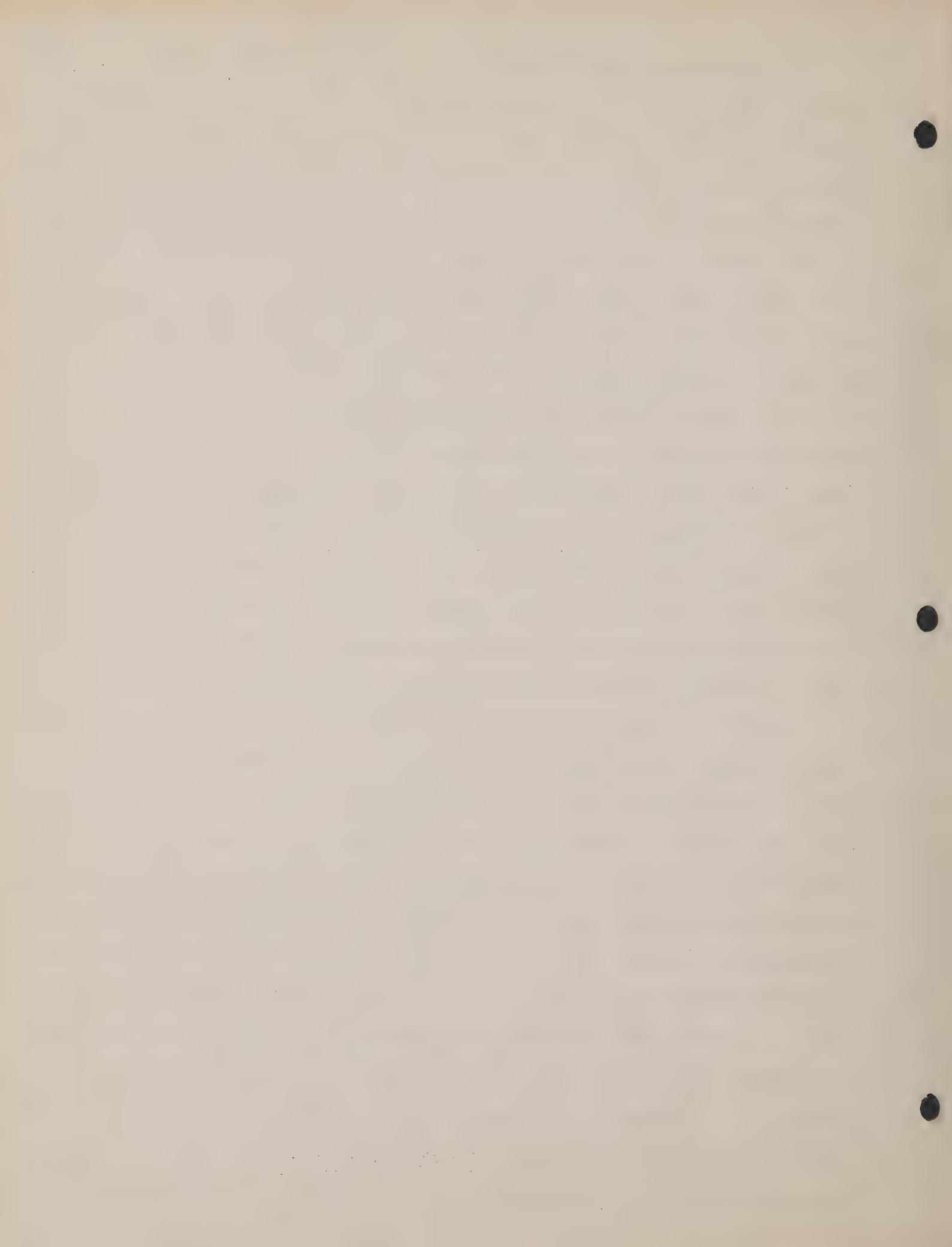
The affirmation that there is a Power that makes for salvation works havoc with the assumption current among a certain type of ethics to the effect that morality must rest on theology or that conscience must be validated by the sanctions of reward and punishment which of course only God could mete out. The trouble with that assumption is that it conceives of duty or morality as criteria of what one must do to satisfy a certain abstract norm or principle usually identified as conscience. This norm or principle is at first set up as something for which we must live. But then comes the question: what is there to warrant this claim for that norm or principle? And the answer which the ethicists give is: the fact that it makes for life -- i.e. obedience to it is rewarded and violation of it punished -- proves that we ought to live for it. It is apparent that they are arguing in a circle.

On the other hand, in setting up salvation or maximum life as our goal we are not imposing anything on the human being from without, but merely articulating what he naturally and spontaneously sets up as his goal. As a living being, he exerts the will to live. As a conscious living being he is aware of alternatives which represent different degrees of living. What he lacks is a clear notion of the true character of the alternative. This knowledge and the incentives to it constitute the history of his efforts to discover the true way of life. What he speaks of as "divine command, as duty or as conscience is part of what he regards as essential to his attaining the maximum life. But the knowledge of what constitutes the maximum life is a much more difficult problem than he has hitherto even suspected. Until recently he assumed that revelation took care of that. Latterly he assumed, if he was an ethicist, that conscience or intuition saw to it that we should know what constitutes maximum life or salvation.



The soteric approach implies that before we can have conscience or sense of duty or morality, we must agree on what we shall understand by salvation or maximum life. The validation of what we agree on would necessarily coincide with the correspondence between inner goodness and outer goods, if salvation were made synonymous with the attainment of outer goods. This however is what we question. It is true that human beings seem to act on the assumption that salvation is the attainment of outer goods. Yet there are two indubitable facts which fly in the face of that assumption. One is that in striving deliberately for the attainment of outer goods one always misses the sense of salvation, both while engaged in the striving and even more after one has attained those outer goods. The other fact is that like the ocean that is crossed by the gulf stream, the striving after outer goods has since the beginning of human history been crossed by a conscious striving after maximum life, which while part of the general nieus of human life somehow represented another and deeper current of reality than the striving after what we generally term happiness or the attainment of outer goods.

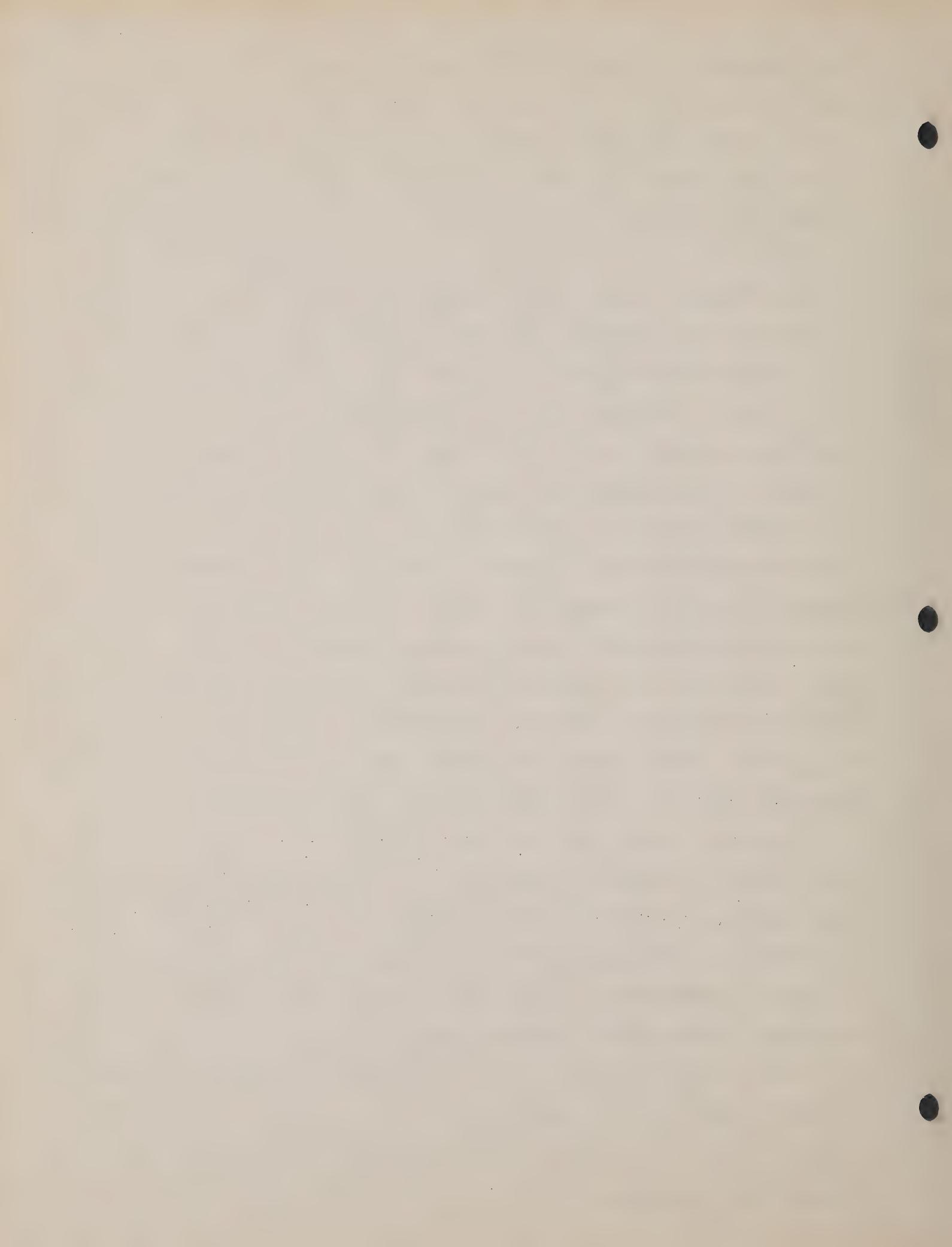
Whatever we come to identify as true salvation or the maximum life is in no need of sanctions or of validation by a Power not ourselves. The very fact that we come to regard an objective as constituting maximum life implies that we find it to be inherently satisfying and self-justifying. And insofar as we find that objective to be thus inherently satisfying, we experience it as integral to the cosmic process viewed anthropocentrically. Or to put it differently, the objective becomes self-validating by reason of the fact that it gives meaning to our lives. It makes of life as we know and experience it a cosmos instead of a chaos, with us as the center of reference and with the Power not ourselves as the frame of reference. That is perhaps all the validation we should expect of a conception of salvation: a tenable and in every way consistent center of reference for all that enters our consciousness,



and a tenable and in every way consistent frame of ~~xxx~~ reference to all that reality which we identify as the objective world, (including our own bodies and minds). Thus self and God are not posited as verities or realities outside salvation, but as the inevitable implications of a satisfying conception of salvation and as actual objects of realization in a life lived on the basis of such a conception of salvation.

The "Humanist Manifesto" of 1933 declares in its fifth article "That the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values" (The New Humanist, 6:2). There is as much sense to that statement as there would be to one which would affirm that the nature of the human being as depicted by modern science makes unacceptable the assumption of an ego or of personality or even for that matter the assumption of consciousness. Strictly speaking from a narrowly scientific standpoint Watson is right and behaviorism can adequately account for everything that we ascribe to consciousness without positing consciousness. Even illusion, from the behavioristic standpoint, is...what? illusion? That cannot be, for that would imply the objective existence of consciousness. The truth is that modern science makes unacceptable the very notion of values. So why bother about their supernatural or cosmic guarantees.

The trouble with this confused thinking of the Humanists is that they are still fighting windmills. It is about time that they realized that the issue is no longer the supernaturalistic or theurgic conception of reality vs. the naturalistic or scientific. The problem which should engage us is: how that we have come to accept the scientific approach as valid and indispensable within the sphere of reality which has nothing to do with values, and now that we recognize that values have ~~xxx~~ their origin in man's will to attain maximum life, how shall we recapture the sense of life's unity in our effort to achieve salvation? For the present both the ego as center of reference, and God as the frame of



reference have meaning only in the realm of values. Must we resign ourselves to the conclusion that they are either irrelevant or untrue in the realm of science? It may well be that we shall have so to resign ourselves, but not without awareness of the fact that science is only a provisional method for obtaining a specific type of results, but not for telling us the actual story of reality?

If then we have to maintain the objectivity of human values apart from science, we have to trust the inevitable implications and inferences of such objectivity. One of these implications is cosmos. Cosmos is a meaningless term apart from a central organizing principle or center of reference. Certainly the very notion of value implies a center of reference, and a center of reference which give to Being the pattern of a cosmos creates or implies a frame of reference. Self and God as they function in a scheme of values do not guarantee those values. That would be like saying the center and circumference "guarantee" the existence of the circle (in the geometric sense). In the old way of speaking "Self" and "God" were supernatural entities. But as we now understand them they are realities of a different order from those natural phenomena that science (in the strict sense of the term) deals with.

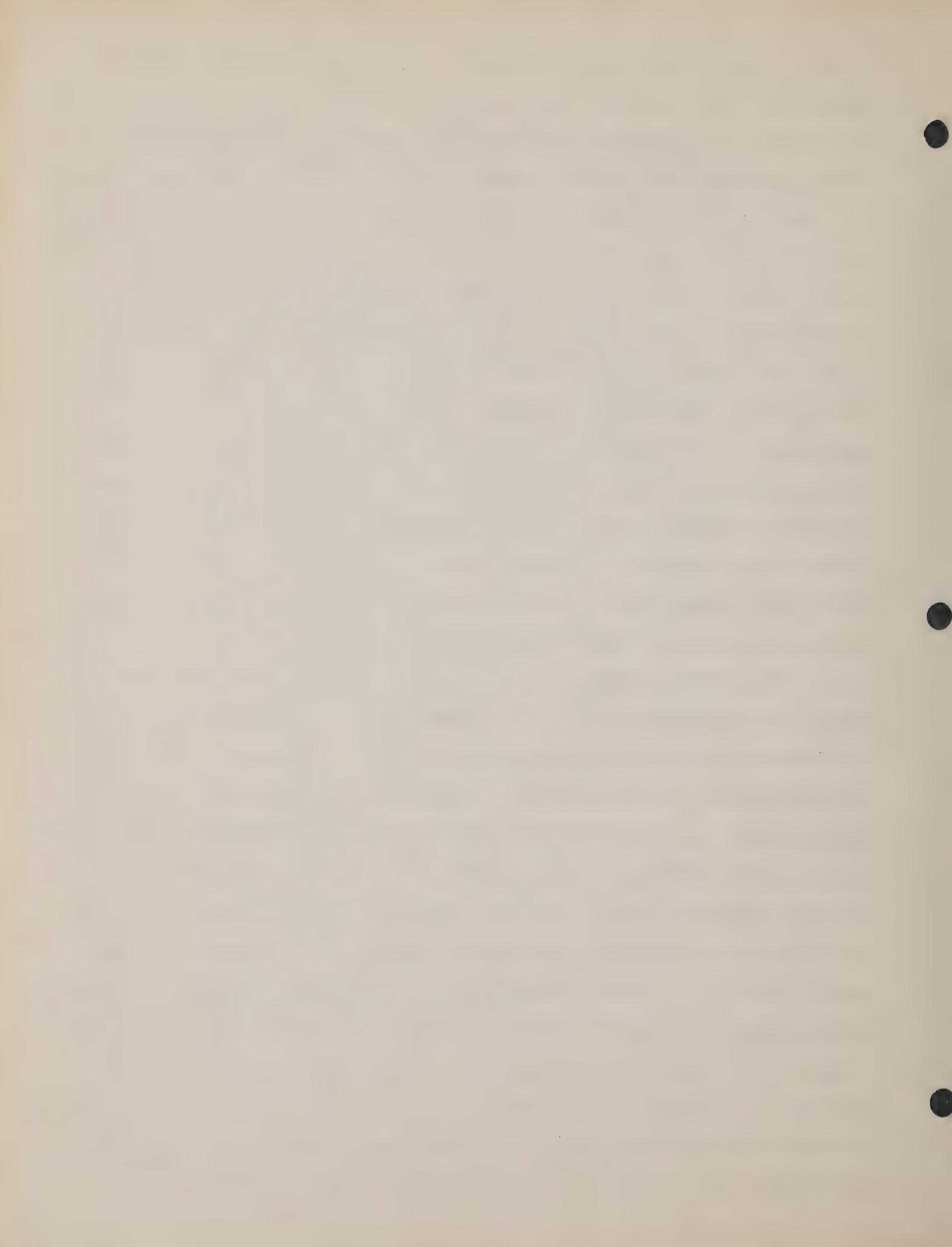
The upshot of it all is that the Humanist movement is of little help in solving the problem of values, i.e. in discovering what it is that we should identify as salvation or maximum life.

One way of arriving at an understanding of salvation is to study actual cases, both individual and collective, in which by dint of will a greater amount and better quality of life was achieved than might ordinarily be expected. In a short story, e.g. called "The Borrowed Times" which appeared in the Nov. 1940 issue of The Reader's Digest, the writer, Alfred Prowitt describes "how a group of people, given up



by their doctors, are cheating death, paying their own way and having the time of their lives." This is how the story opens: "Near Ellensburg, Washington, in a thinly populated ranch country, live the Borrowed Timers, probably the world's strangest organization. Each one of them has been given up by the doctors and should have died from one to four years ago. But since the colony started in 1936 not one has died. And they are paying their own way by their own work, they are caring for each other, and they are happy. No one who had not seen them would believe that a group of 15 doomed invalids could be so light-hearted. This seeming miracle is due simply to the will to live, and to live helpfully. It is a glowing illustration of the power of mind over body."

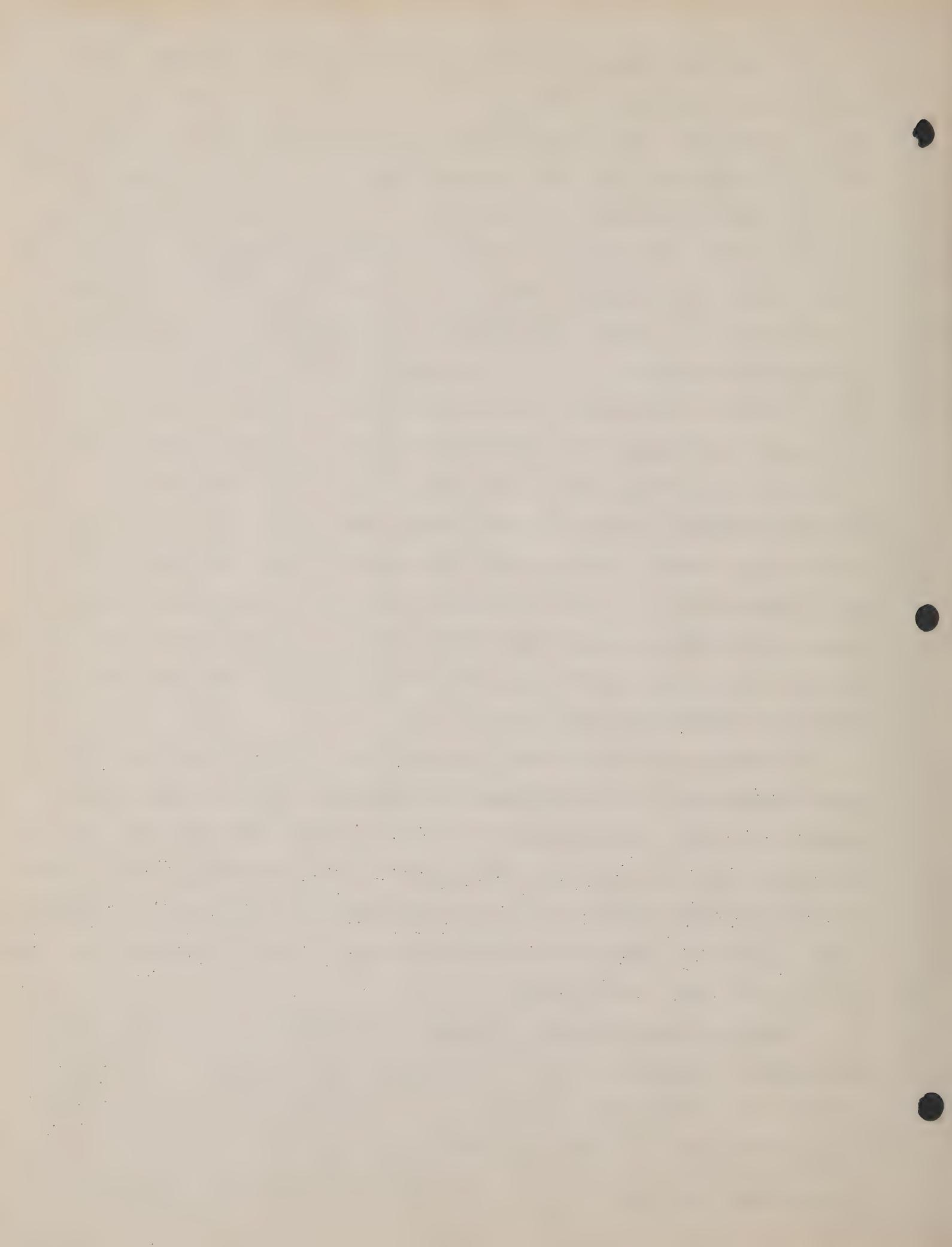
..."Commenting on the survival of this group, Dr. Irving S. Cutter, dean of the School of Medicine at Northwest University says 'When a physician is compelled to predict death, he realizes that the reaction of the individual may upset his estimate. If the patient reacts morbidly, his distress disturbs physiological processes and shortens his life. The Borrowed Timers seem to have achieved a life preserving philosophy. By accepting fate, by resolving to make their last days useful, by discovering the self-helping outlet of helping others, they extend their own lives. Many invalids in hospitals and charitable institutions could be up and about, enjoying days that they might prolong into years, if they had this will to live. Just as the well man, by wise and hygienic living can extend his years beyond the average span, so can the ill, the doomed, stetch and improve his existence, through his mental outlook.' 'We've discovered that the things we enjoy most are right around us,' says Nancy Green (one of the characters in the story). 'When we know they may be taken away at any time, we cherish them all the more. I guess a person has to get into trouble over his head before he learns how to enjoy life.'" Of much that might be inferred from the foregoing I select the following:



In the first place, it is necessary to establish the fact that salvation or making the most out of life is relative to the powers, the circumstances and opportunities in which those who are striving for salvation happen to be. What is salvation for a well man is unthinkable for the invalid who had been operated on for cancer and has had most of his stomach removed. The traditional tendency to formulate a conception of salvation, as though it were a fixed quantity and quality of life, regardless of the powers with which one is endowed and the circumstances in which one is placed, must be abandoned. We can only state as a general principle that no matter how limited one's powers (so long as one is fairly intelligent) and how straitened one's circumstances, he has the choice of getting either more or less out of his life, and that if he exert himself, he can get more rather than less. So true is this that even at worst, as when a man is bereft of all power and is physically and mentally put to the wrack or tortured to death, he can achieve salvation by dying as a martyr instead of as a helpless worm. The martyr, by the very act of sacrificing his life testifies to the high quality of the life made possible by his sacrifice.

Secondly, the right mental outlook, even if far from being the sole determinant in the attainment of salvation is certainly an indispensable factor. It consists, if we are to judge from the story, in accepting fate, in believing that however bleak or cruel it be, it does not shut out the possibility of a choice between getting either more or less out of life, and in definitely choosing to get more rather than less out of what fate has to offer.

Thirdly, some fortunate circumstance or measure of ability must be present if salvation is to be attained. In this story G. S. Thomas brought with him experience which he had gained as an engineer in Washington where he had worked on a project for settling rehabilitated war veterans on the land. We are told "He thinks the germ of his borrowed-



time inspiration came as he watched the revival of hope in these broken men when given useful tasks." It is doubtful, whether this same invalid, if he hadn't this experience to suggest to him a way of getting the other invalids to do easy remunerative work, would have thought of doing what he did to redeem their lives from lingering misery.

Incidentally there is a very important implication in the above story for such a group as the Jews. All signs point to its inevitable extinction within the next several decades. This process it appears will be achieved to the accompaniment of physical and mental torment at the hands of a barbarized humanity. Yet even the certainty of such a fate does not preclude the choice between getting either more or less out of life. Reconstructionism calls upon the Jews to make a heroic choice instead of dwelling morbidly upon the certainty of extinction or just making believe that such fears are fantastic. For all we know we might yet cheat death for a far longer period than at present seems possible.

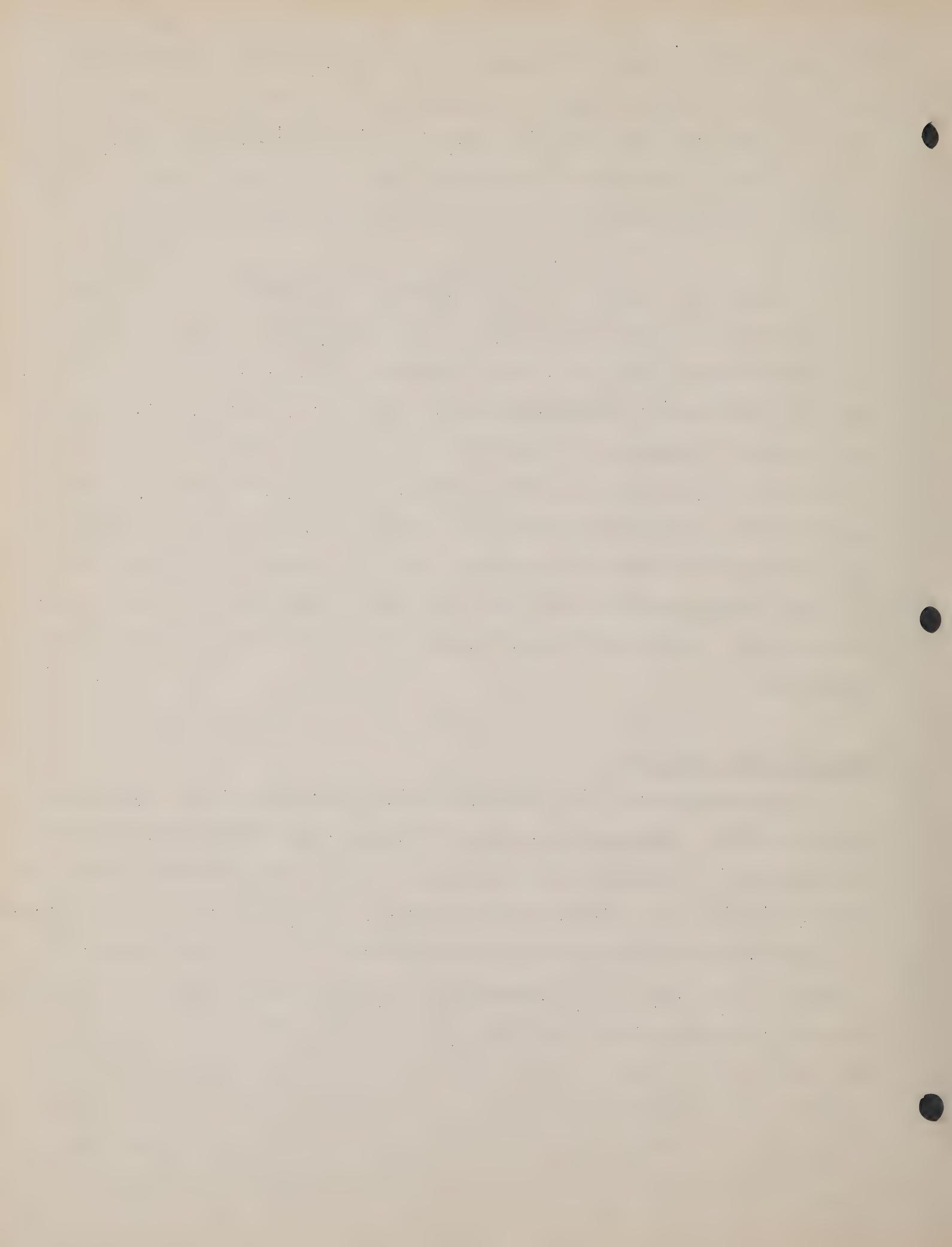
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Friday, Oct. 25, 1940

The acceptance of the inevitable may constitute either damnation or salvation. Defeatist acceptance is damnation; creative acceptance is salvation. Damnation is living death; it is the paralysis not of the will to live but of the will to salvation. When one's will to live thrives at the expense of the will to live what one knows to be the better or worthier life, we have the paradox of a living death, because the zoological will is alive while the human will is dead. The soul of such a person is like a body infected with a mortal disease that is eating away at the living tissue. Some persons who are thus afflicted physically manage to make the most of the life that is left to them. What happens in that case is not due so much to the power of the mind over



the body. It is primarily due to the power of the will to salvation over the will to live, i.e. of the human mind over the zoological mind. When the two are integrated they devise those means for the body whereby it is enabled to arrest the disease that threatens it.

Most instances of inner conflict or divided will represent the state of mind in which the will to make the most out of life ~~xxxxxx~~ (salvation) is in conflict with the will to live. The will to live functions in the biological urges which man has in common with the sub-human. The will to salvation functions through these same urges but only insofar as they are integrated into the complex of human and cosmic relationships which give rise to the human differentia. All too often however these biological urges rebel at being so integrated, and insist upon self-fulfillment regardless of the values and meanings which constitute the human differentia. This is the situation commonly recognized in traditional religion and morality as the struggle between the evil inclination and the good inclination.

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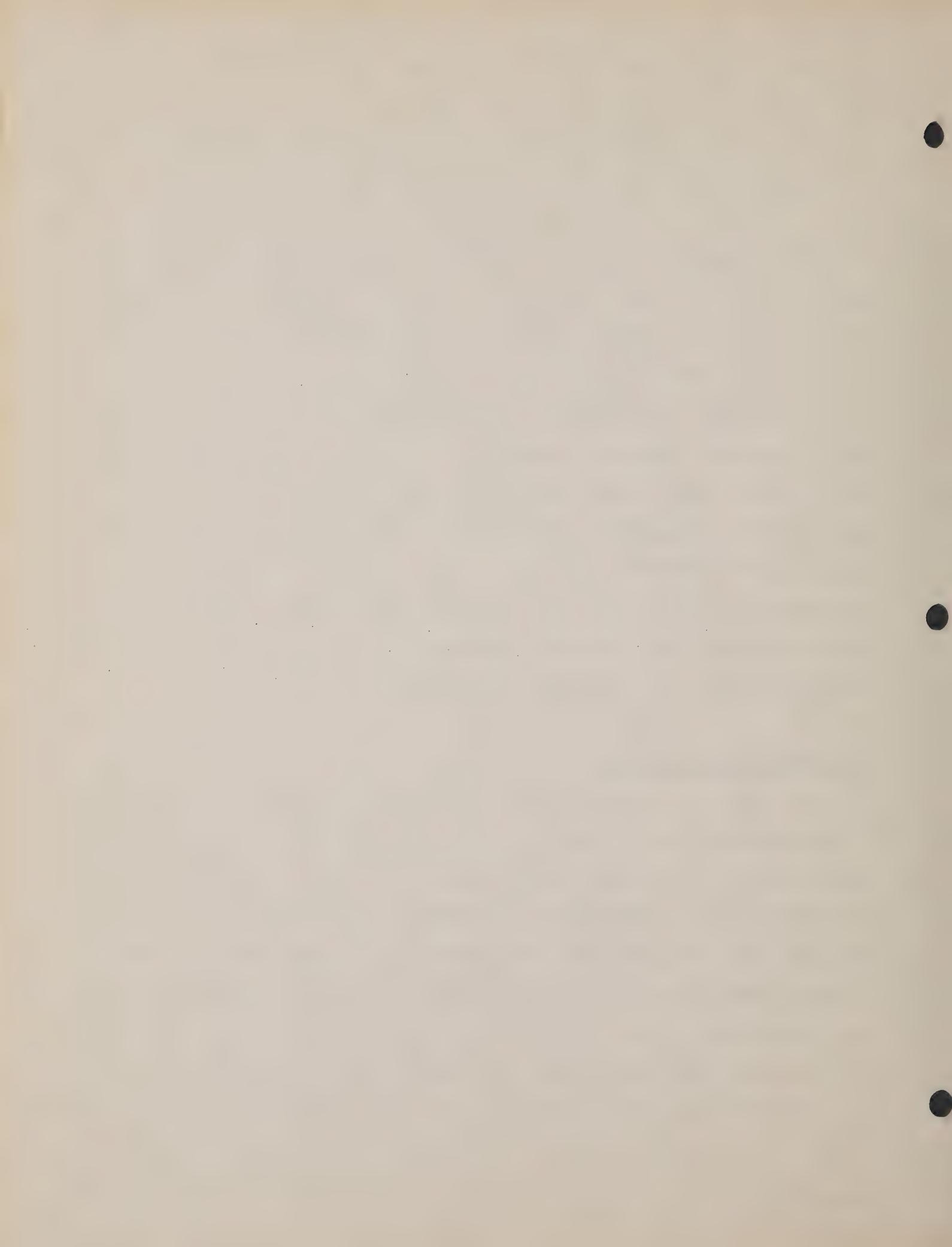
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Saturday, Oct. 26, 1940

The story in Genesis which is intended to account for the existence of sin, suffering and death in human life, describes Adam and Eve as having eaten of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil and thereby having become, according to the serpent's temptation, like unto gods. The fact that the fruit should have made them like unto gods throws light on what we are to understand by the knowledge of good and evil. That knowledge of good and evil can be no other than the sense of power which often turns man's head and causes him to think himself a god.

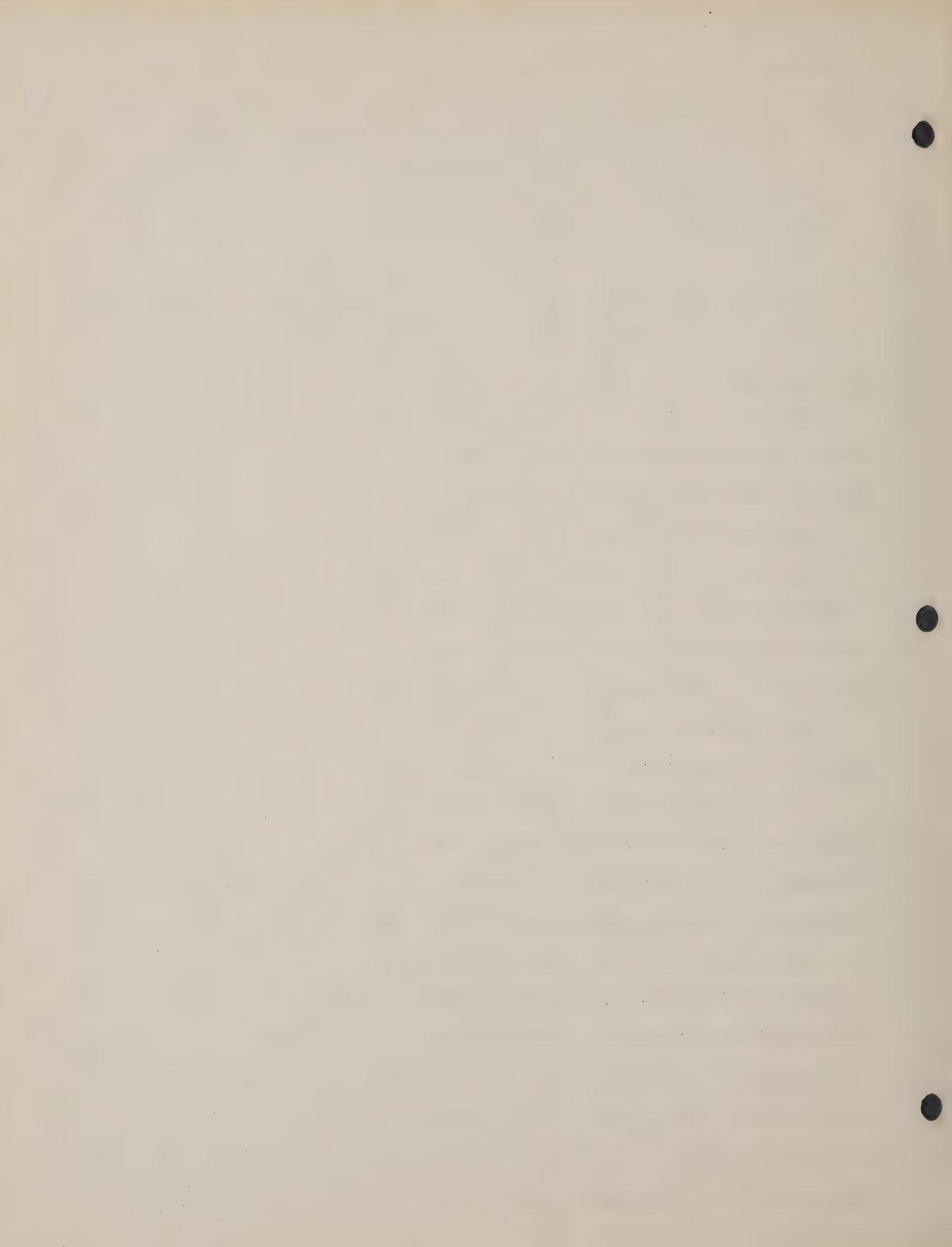
Why the sense of power should have this effect becomes clear when we recall how easily one may effect the transition from the will to salvation to the Power that makes for salvation in the course of inner



contemplation. It is as though the center of reference were to absorb into itself the frame or circumference of reference. When the ego is drunk with power of whatever kind, it is all too likely to think itself God because there is nothing but humility to draw the boundary between the self and not-self in the region of the soul.

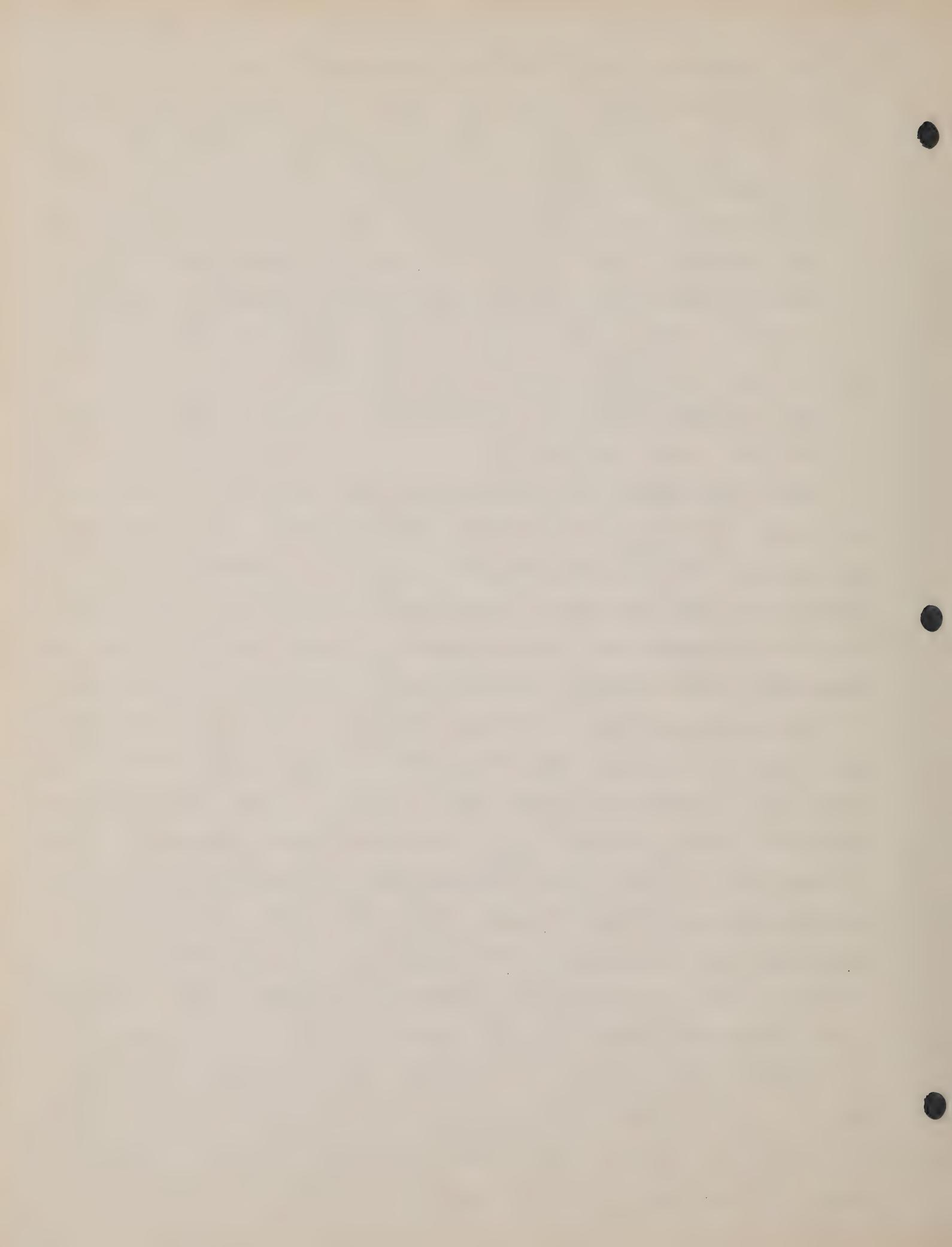
One of the functions of the soteric approach is to correct the fallacies that necessarily result from treating theology and ethics as though they were two distinct sciences, with entirely different areas of reality or human experience for their subject matter. It is only when theology and ethics are viewed thus, instead of being regarded as merely stressing different phases of the same subject matter, the one the center of reference, the other the frame of reference, that we fall into a line of reasoning like the following: "God either could have prevented evil and wouldn't or he would have and couldn't; if he could have but wouldn't he is not at all good; if he would have but couldn't he is not at all powerful. Either his power or his goodness goes. A bad God would not, and a weak God could not, effectively espouse the cause of conscience." (T.V. Smith, "Beyond Conscience" p. 59).

What is wrong with the dilemma as thus formulated? It ignores the fact that our main concern is not with conscience but with the will to maximum life. The Power that makes for life does not have to be proved logically; it is an indisputable fact that life as found in an individual being is not the creation of that being but that being is the outcome of an actual power, as concrete as heat, electricity and gravitation. The same is true of the life which has attained that self-awareness which enables it to grow in quality and quantity, in outreach and depth of experience. Such will to live the maximum life is not the creation of any human being, but human beings are the products of its objective existence. If the human being is an ethicist and chooses to regard



maximum life as the goal of morality, conscience, sense of duty or as that which God wills, he can do so. But he unfortunately falls into the tendency of regarding the ethical approach as self-contained and so makes the mistake of treating morality, conscience etc. as the end to which life is the means. The theologian likewise introduces confusion into the problem of human life, by treating the conception of God as pertaining to something other than life, and before long he entangles himself in his own traces as when he is not sure whether he is talking about an objective reality that is all powerful and good or a mere idea of such a reality, or when he finds it hard to reconcile an all powerful God with an all good God.

While theologians and ethicists are busy with their logomachies, the saints, mystics and prophets are concerned with "what a man shall do and live." To them God and life are rightly synonymous. But they realize that they represent a minute segment of that life, they feel impelled to express what kind of a path the larger life -- or Power not themselves -- is seeking to channel out for itself so as to increase its own quantity and quality to the uttermost possible under whatever conditions it happens to find for itself in human world. Part of its very striving consists or has come to consist, in changing conditions. Whether it is all powerful or not is entirely beside the point. It is than a power certainly far greater ~~than~~ any individual human being and even than any society of human beings, or even the whole of contemporary humanity. It is coextensive with the humanity past, present and future. Certainly that is a power to be reckoned with. That it has to contend with the forces that make for disintegration, death and evil goes without saying. Yet the term make does not signify the same in the case of evil as it does in the case of the good. The good is actually intended, the evil merely happens and is part of the chance and chaos against which life or the will to live contends.

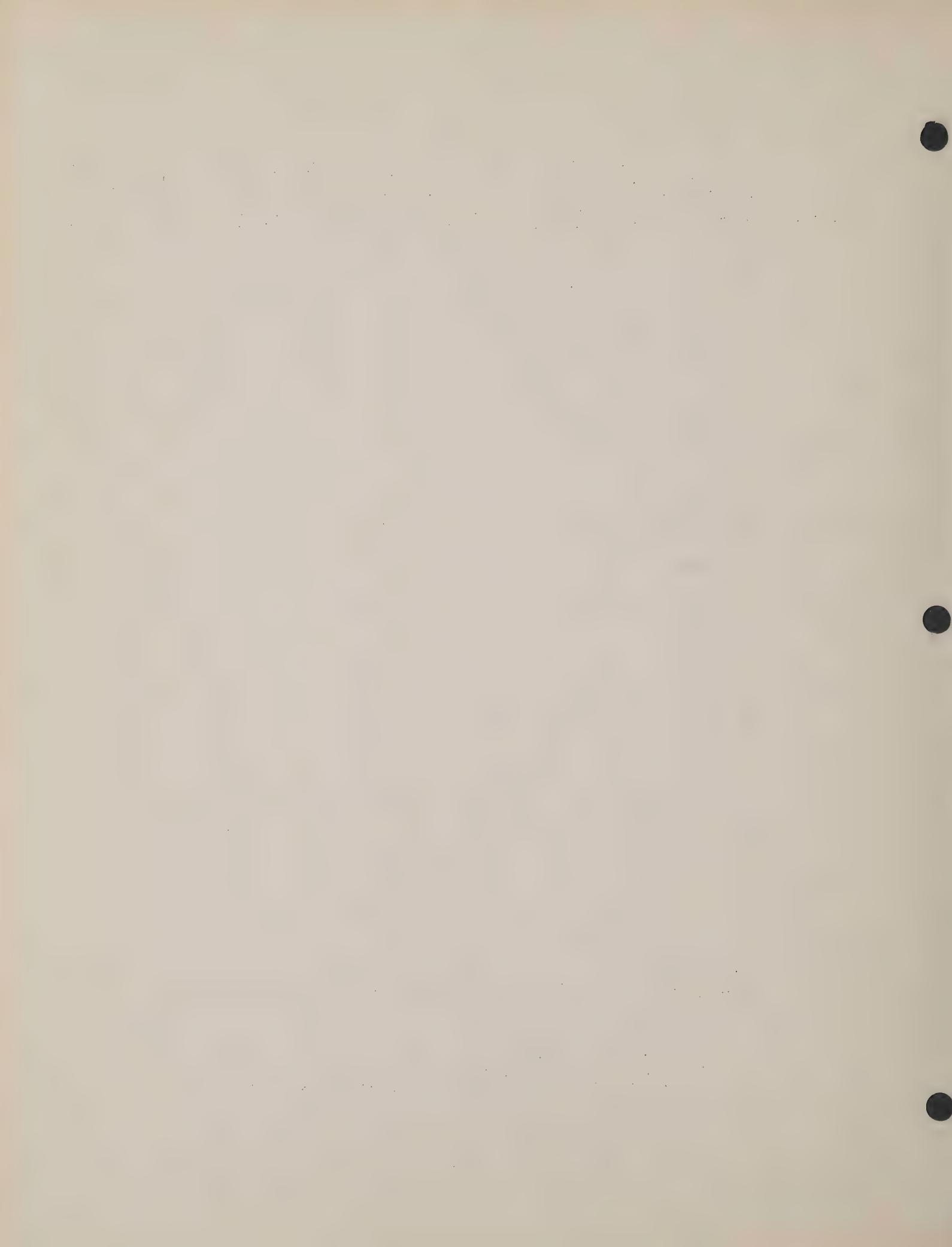


In all religions, the adherents are mainly concerned with the will to maximum life or salvation. In their mythologies, they ~~hypostatize~~ hypostatize that will. It is imagined as operating in the form of superhuman entities or gods to which they ascribe certain epic or historical careers. These careers are usually the same as those in which the worshippers of those gods figure. This fact about the mythologies namely, that they are interwoven with the experiences of particular peoples in their saving grace. It is that which prevents the God idea of the various religions from being abstracted from the actual complex of the striving after maximum life on the part of some concrete collectivity. But the moment the philosophers, theologians and ethicists begin their respective process of abstracting the idea of God from the process that makes for maximum life, whether it is to prove the existence of God, His power, or His goodness or it is to validate conscience and its dictates, we encounter all kinds of unreal dilemmas and artificial difficulties. It is the purpose of soterics, therefore, to recapture the original organic character of the experience of wanting to make the most of one's life, that character which such experience possessed for the millions of human beings that have found their bearings in life in the various religions they have lived by, whether the historical religions or the modern ones which come under such guises as ~~nationalism~~ nationalism, socialism, etc.

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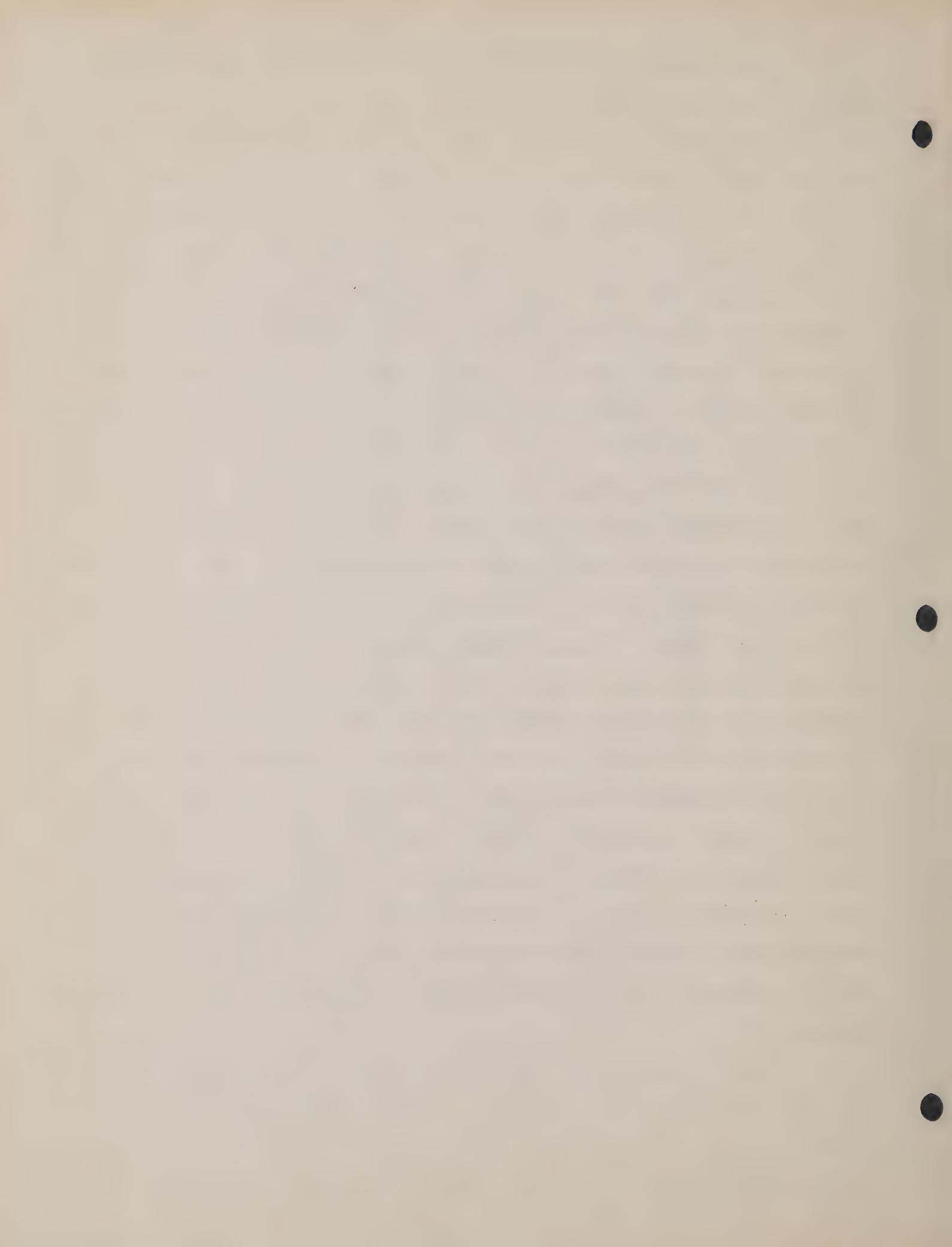
Sunday, Oct. 27, 1940

We would understand more easily the self-entanglement of the human mind in respect to its concern in the attainment of salvation, if we were to imagine the following situation: Let us assume that we make the discovery that what actually happens when we medicate ourselves to fight off some ailment and manage to recover, is that we have permitted nature to effect the cure. Now suppose instead of concentrating on the



study of the ailmen t, i.e. observing the conditions that bring it about, the changes that take place in the human organism when the ailment attacks it, and the conditions that favor the cure of the ailment, we concentrate on the general idea of nature and begin to speculate whether there is such a thing as nature, whether it is finite or infinite, interested in human beings and their welfare or not. We would then introduce into the problem of physical health the same kind of theological machinery whereby we have unnecessarily complicated the problem of spiritual health. We would then waste our energy in spinning out all kinds of arguments about Nature, cosmological, teleological and ontological. Some would be saying that Nature is merely an idea with no power, and others would say it is power without any purpose. There would also arise various physidicies, on lines analogous to the theodicies, to prove that Nature has a beneficent purpose in inflicting ailments, and that they are necessary to give it occasion to exercise its curative powers. Let us further imagine that after all that cob-web spinning, we come to our senses and proceed with the scientific study of the ailment in question and its cure, continuing at the same time to realize that the natural forces or processes whose working we are intent upon observing are not created by us ad hoc, but are ever present, ready to help the patient, provided we know what to do that would expose him fully to their operation. Nature would not lose its sense of reality for us. We would merely become aware that the personification of it is only a short hand way, or if you will, a poetic way of expressing our awareness of the process that makes for physical health.

Let us now translate this hypothetical situation from the problem of physical health to that of maximum life(or mental and moral health) These too whatever we do to overcome the ills that afflict us have value only insofar as they permit the forces and processes that make for



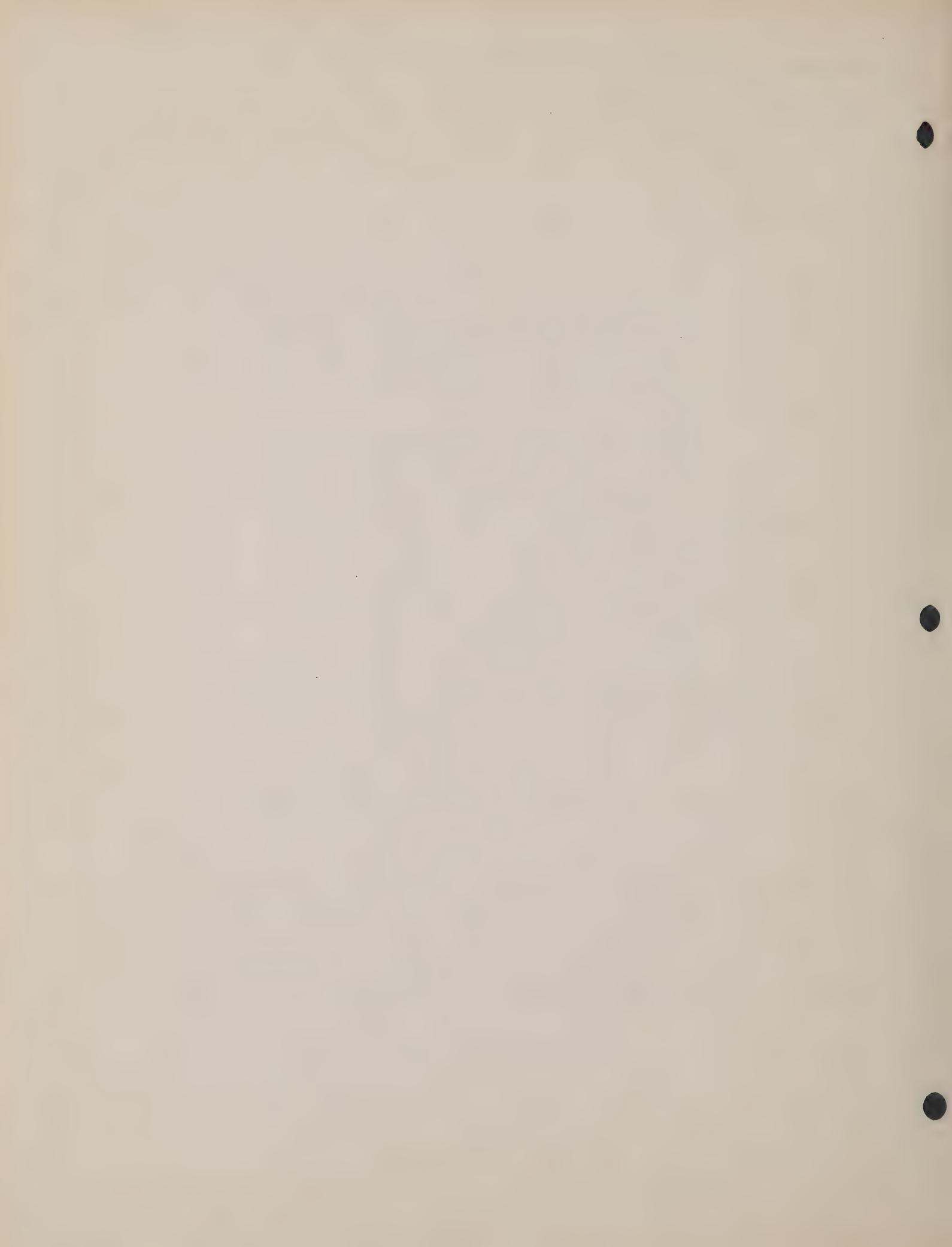
maximum life or health to function unhindered. Those forces or processes are nature, plus just as maximum life or health is physical life or health, plus. We call nature plus, God. But the trouble has been that instead of concentrating on the scientific study of conditions which obtain when human beings are frustrated or damned (or just plainly damned) and the conditions which come into being when the hindrances to the operation of the spiritual forces or of the process or Power that makes for maximum life are removed, philosophers, theologians and ethicists have been busy discussing the various proofs for the reality of that process or Power.

It is from this aberration of the human mind that soterics might wean us away by centering our interest on the problem of salvation without dismissing the awareness of the Power not ourselves that makes for salvation as unimportant. But it will exploit that awareness in altogether different fashion from the way it has hitherto been exploited by the theologians and philosophers or even psychologists. The theologians and philosophers have accepted its reification of the process that makes for salvation, if not uncritically, at least as presenting the main problems to be studied from the standpoint of our interest in human salvation. *psychologists, especially Freudians, have treated this awareness as illusion. Soterics will study that awareness as an integral part of the very process that makes for salvation. In other words, it regards self-consciousness in general as part of the life-making process. Hence our awareness of the process that makes for maximum life ~~is~~ itself a factor for maximum life. It should therefore be cultivated.

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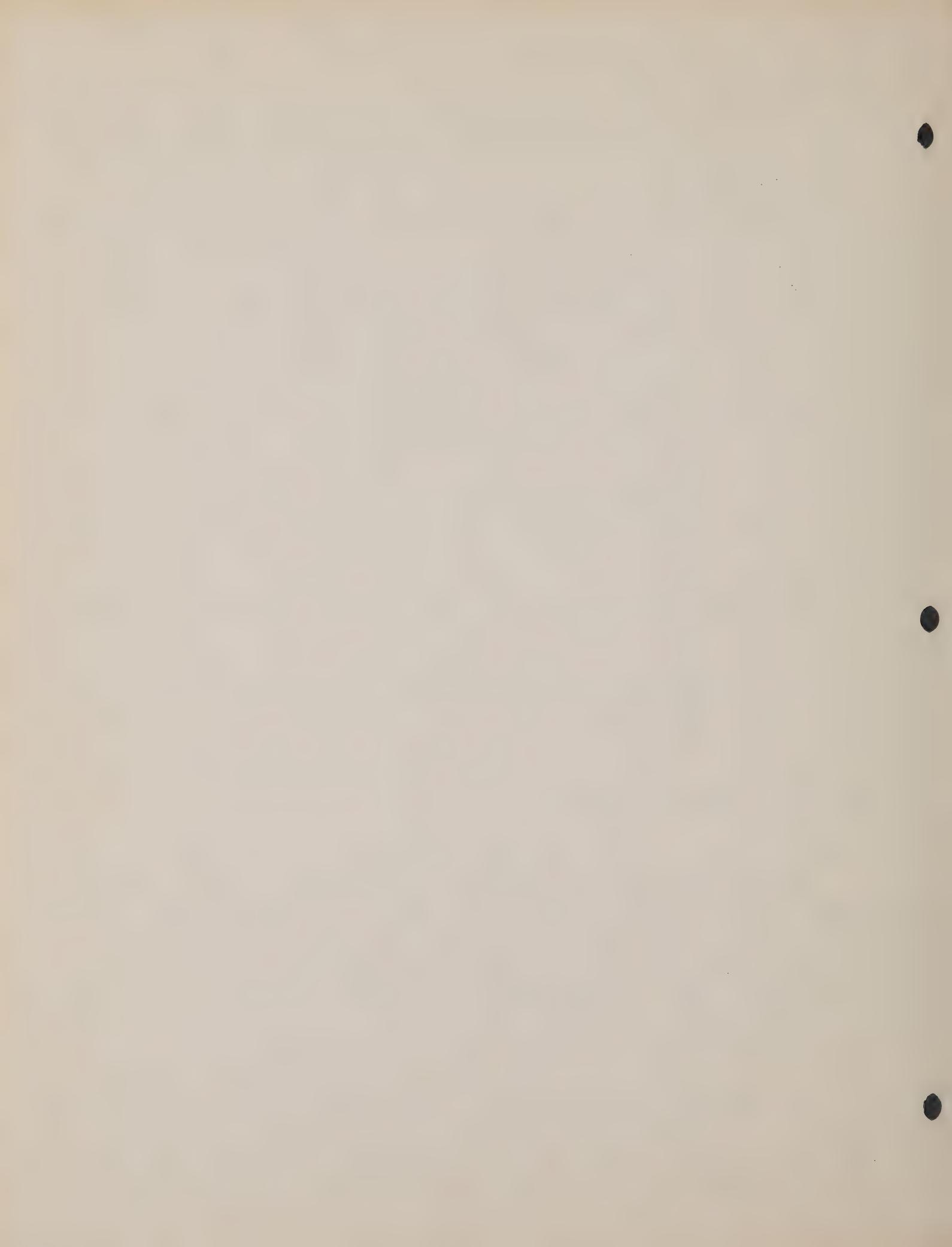


Monday, Oct. 28, 1940

On Saturday night, Oct. 19 I had the members of the T.I. Faculty over to my house. This is the first of a series of social and semi-social gatherings of that Faculty which I expect to hold this year to become more intimately acquainted with them and to get them, if possible, to view the problems of Jewish life and education more intelligently. They are for the most part so shut in within their own little world that they really have no conception of the disintegration which is going on in Jewish life. They are therefore uncompromising in their demands of parents and teachers that the children be given eight to ten hour a week education in Jewish subject matter. If that subject matter were intrinsically worthwhile, and made a difference in the life of the child after he grows up, such a demand would not be unreasonable. But with the present obsolete and irrelevant character of most of that subject matter, people simply will not listen. Somehow my colleagues have an absolutely closed mind to the realization of the actual character of the conventional Jewish subject matter. If as a result of more frequent discussions with them, I would succeed in prying their minds open enough to see the truth I shall have accomplished what to me is as yet an unbelievable miracle.

Sunday, Oct. 20 I accompanied Albert Rosenblatt of the SAJ to the ~~HIAS~~ HIAS preparatory to making the appeal, as I had promised, for the \$1,000,000 campaign whch it is presently engaged in. I was very much impressed by what I saw and by what I learned concerning the work of that institution.

On Saturday, Oct. 19 I spoke at the SAJ services on "The Place of Religion in Human life." I made the point that religion was both a program of salvation and an organization of power with that program as a

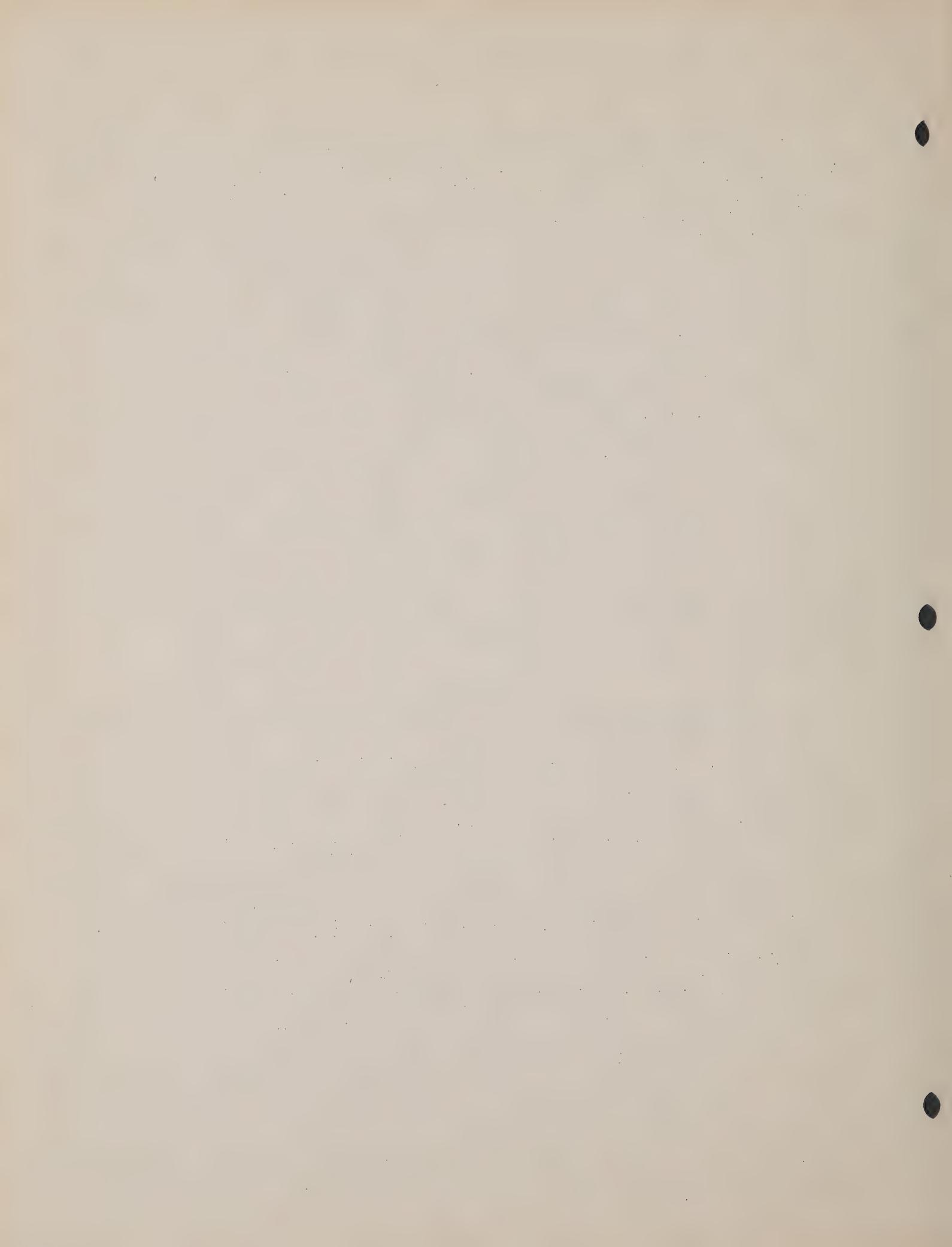


means of fostering social solidarity within the group and domination over other groups, etc.

On Thursday, Oct. 24 (p.296) I preached and made the appeal for the HIAS. Despite my inner rebellion at making appeals I came off successfully. The appeal netted about \$7500.00.

Today I began teaching the new class at the Seminary. This is six weeks since the opening of the TI. I am quite pleased with myself at the way I did my work in class this morning. Not so the way I am handling the TI classes, especially the one in Religion 5-6. Somehow I have under a hard time in getting/their skin, as it were, to set them free from the inhibitions against any kind of thinking concerning religion in terms of a modern outlook. Those inhibitions have been inbred into them by an eight to ten years of a Jewish miseducation. I find the job of deeducating them (?) far from gratifying. It is not that they ~~xxx~~ resist but that they fail to grasp the difference between the traditional and the modern approach to the Bible.

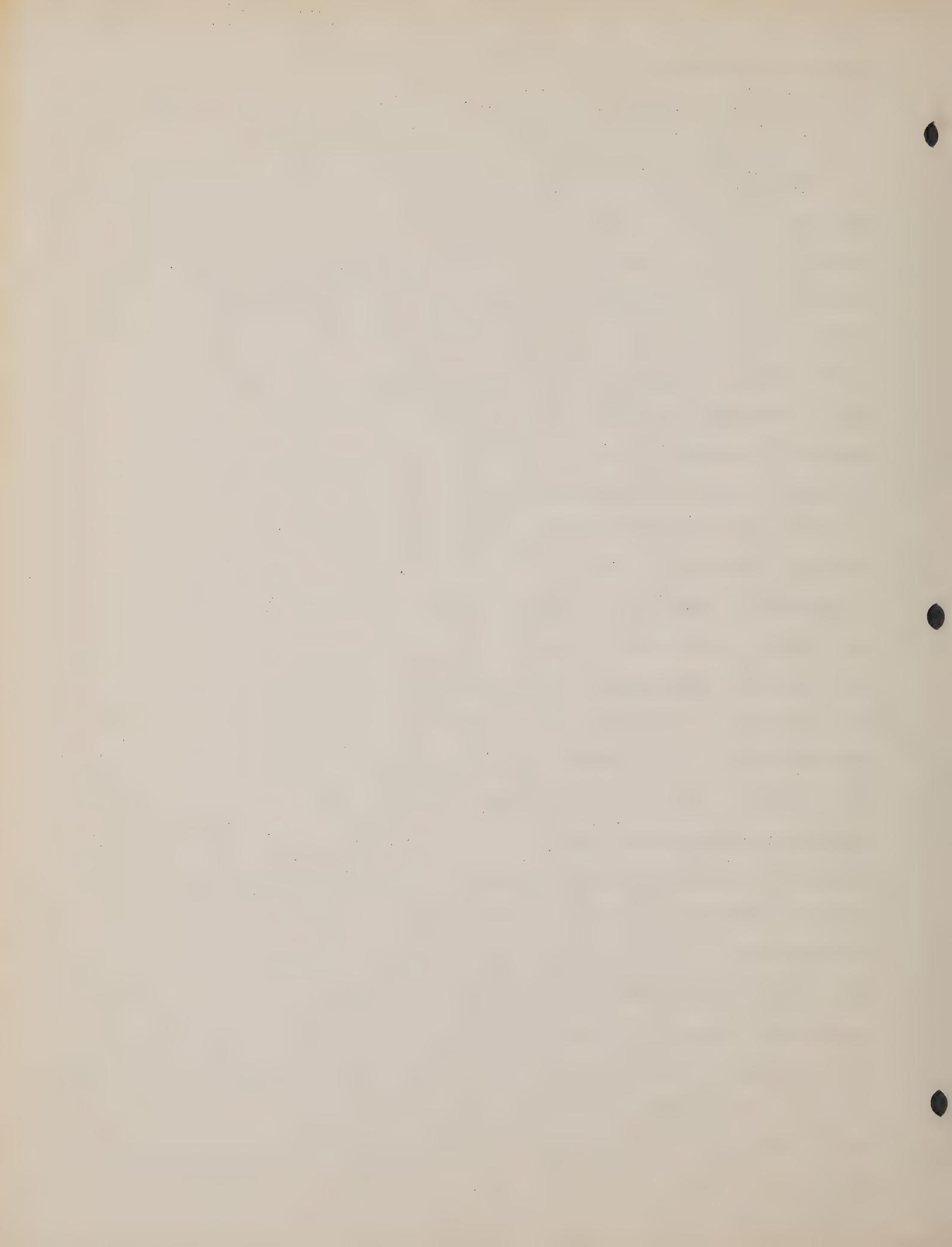
In "Beyond Conscience" T.V. Smith goes to great lengths to prove that theology is incompetent to validate the claim of conscience as knowledge of good and evil. In the first place where do we find that conscience advances any such claims. If he has reference to conscience as it functions in the average person there is nothing further from the truth than to say that the average man's conscience claims that it knows of its own accord what is good and what is evil. There is nothing he would sooner confess than that he obtains his knowledge of good and evil from custom, tradition, mores, etc. Conscience with him is merely either the urge to live up to such knowledge when confronted with temptation to disregard it, or the mental twinges after he has yielded to temptation. Theology in general far from supporting conscience in any such claims as those referred to would be the first to protest against



them and to maintain that man of his own accord could never come to possess the knowledge of good and evil. It is only divine revelation that could have communicated such knowledge to him.

On the other hand, those thinkers who actually regard the human mind as itself the source of the knowledge of good and evil see no necessity for any theological validation. Even in their case, it would hardly be correct to ascribe that knowledge to the conscience. They would assign a place to it in the general consciousness. As such it may be wrong or right, as about facts of any kind. A sense of shame which overcomes a person who is ignorant of some fact which he is supposed to know is like the bad conscience one has after having acted contrary to what he is expected to know of good and evil.

The truth of the matter is that the relation of conscience to theology is the reverse from that which T. V. Smith makes it out to be. It is conscience that in actuality validates theology. The urge to live up to what one regards as good or the experience of remorse for having done wrong is testimony to the presence of a process that gives us no rest until we do what is right. It may not be a perfectly logical demonstration, but it certainly gives strong intimation of the reality of a Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness. That this Power is good is necessarily implied in the validation. How effective that Power is in enforcing its goodness -- that depends upon the force experienced in the urge to the right or in the remorse for the wrong. If it can become sufficiently strong to make of this world a better world than it is -- and there is no reason why it shouldn't, if we would only allow it to operate -- then it is sufficiently strong to be an object of worship and source of solace and hope. This is exactly and all that a God of religion is or need be. And any theology that attempts to dress out God with a lot of infinite attributes is only making a nuisance of itself.



Tuesday, Oct. 29, 1940

Is there any justifiable basis for the dichotomy that according to T. V. Smith exists between the dictates of conscience working outright and their working out well? He understand by "working out right" that those dictates appear to be inherently good, and by "working out well" that they result in the attainment of outer goods. Naturally, if working out well is thus narrowly interpreted, there is the dichotomy to which Smith refers. Likewise if inherently right is identified with some arbitrarily abstract principle of rightness. But why not first make sure that right and well coincide. There is nothing intrinsically present in either term to preclude their being identical, though such identity may necessitate our understanding of them. In fact what is actually necessary is a fiat of the will to salvation that right and well shall coincide. The task for moralists is not to set up arbitrary meanings of terms and then spend their energies trying to explain the logical difficulties that arise from such meanings, but rather to attend to genuine problems which grow out of the will to salvation. One of these genuine problems is how to conceive doing right and doing well in such a way that they would coincide.

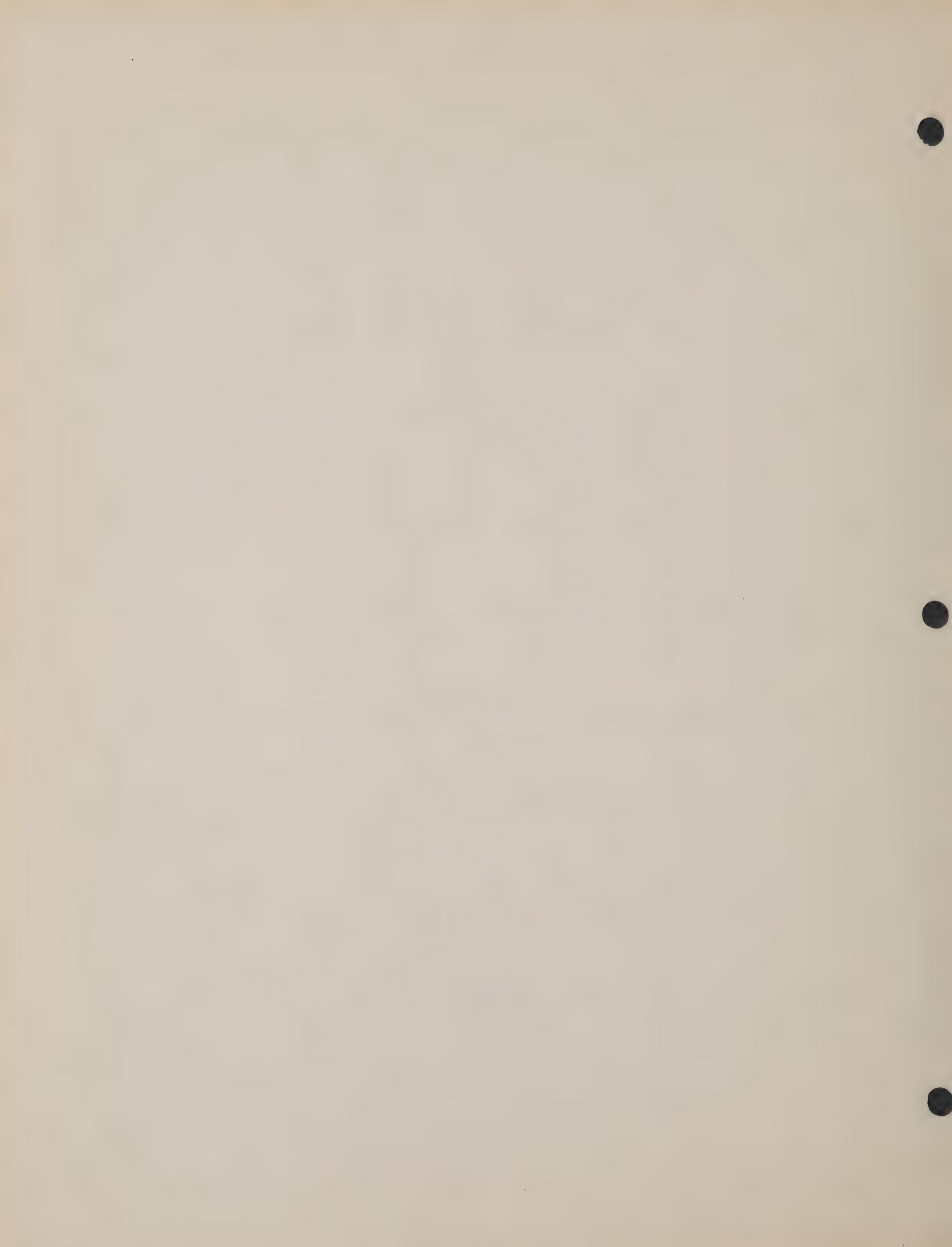
The same applies to theologians. Instead of expecting them to reconcile the existence of God with His goodness, they should be expected so to make clear what is meant by the existence of God and how we should conceive His goodness so that there would be no need for reconciliation. In calling for reconciliation we impose upon them our understanding of God's existence and goodness. We assume that the understanding we have is the only correct one and we expect the theologian to remove the contradictions for which he may not at all be responsible.

It is this fallacious dichotomizing which has led many thinkers to assume that rightness and power have nothing to do with each other either in ethics or theology. They fail to see that both rightness



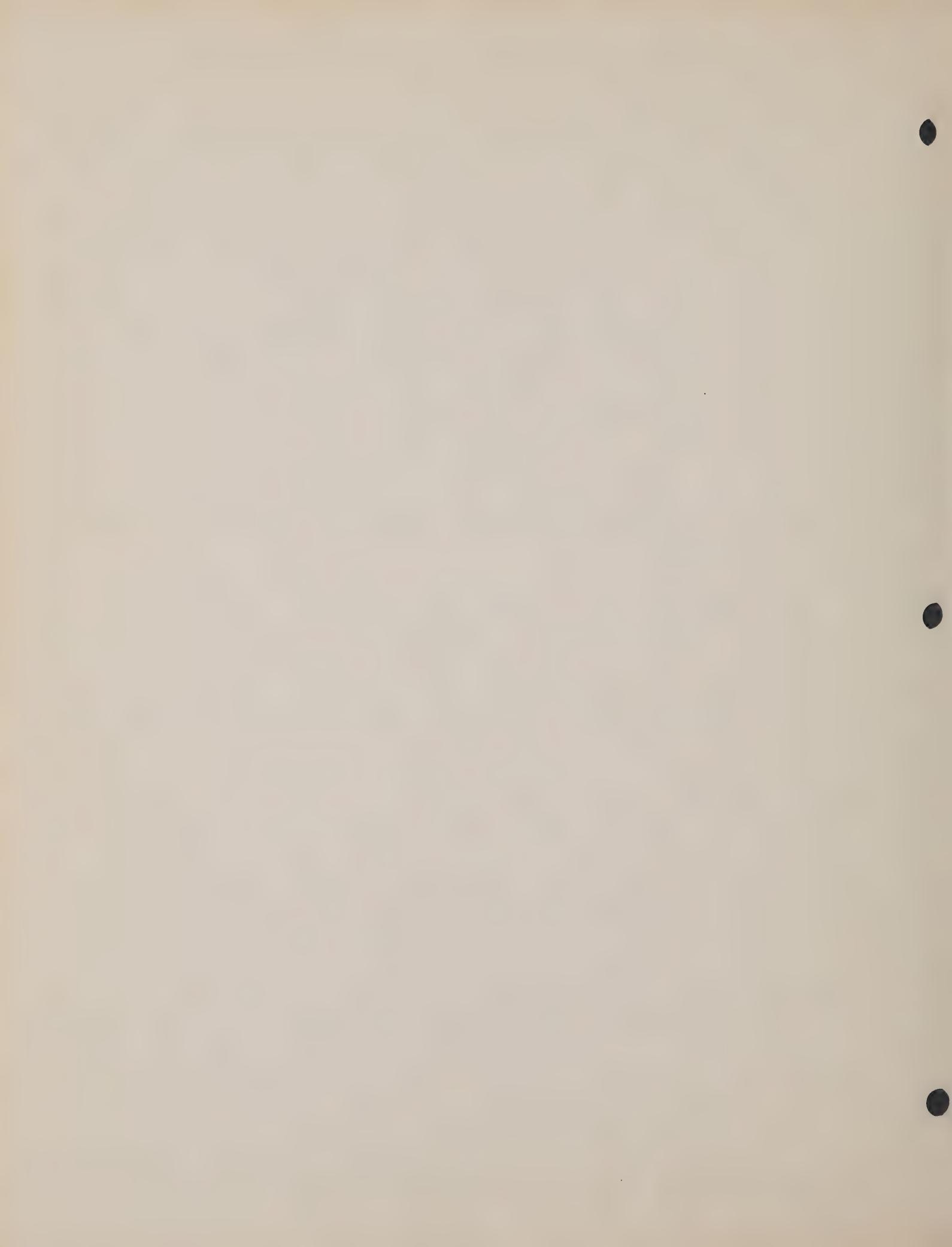
and power by themselves are abstract concepts that have no corresponding separate existences. In actuality all rightness is rightness of power and all power is either right or not right from the standpoint of that upon which it operates. Goodness is simply a generalized abstract concept for the infinite number of actual situations in which one thing is good for another. Goodness is the sense of good for human life or for salvation is one specialized situation out of that infinite number. But every possible situation is a locus of power. Plato long ago noted that mere existence is power, and no existence is possible unless it is the existence of something which fits in with some other thing. Hence existence, power and goodness or rightness necessarily coincide. Hegel was right in maintaining that existence is rational. That T. V. Smith criticizes him simply means that for T. V. Smith a thing can be conceived as existing without qualities of any kind, for if it has qualities that contribute to its existence it is to that extent right or natural.

Soterics is based not upon a theory but upon experience, the experience of the will to salvation. Its first task is to explore that experience, to describe as many of its manifestations as possible, to discover what is common to all those manifestations. It is especially important to observe its relation to the emotional and ideological aspect of life, to the institutional expression of life, including the economic, the political, the social and religious. It is only then that we shall be prepared to grapple with the problem of formulating norms that might guide us in all the manifestations of the will to salvation so that it might achieve its objective, if not entirely, at least to a reasonable degree.



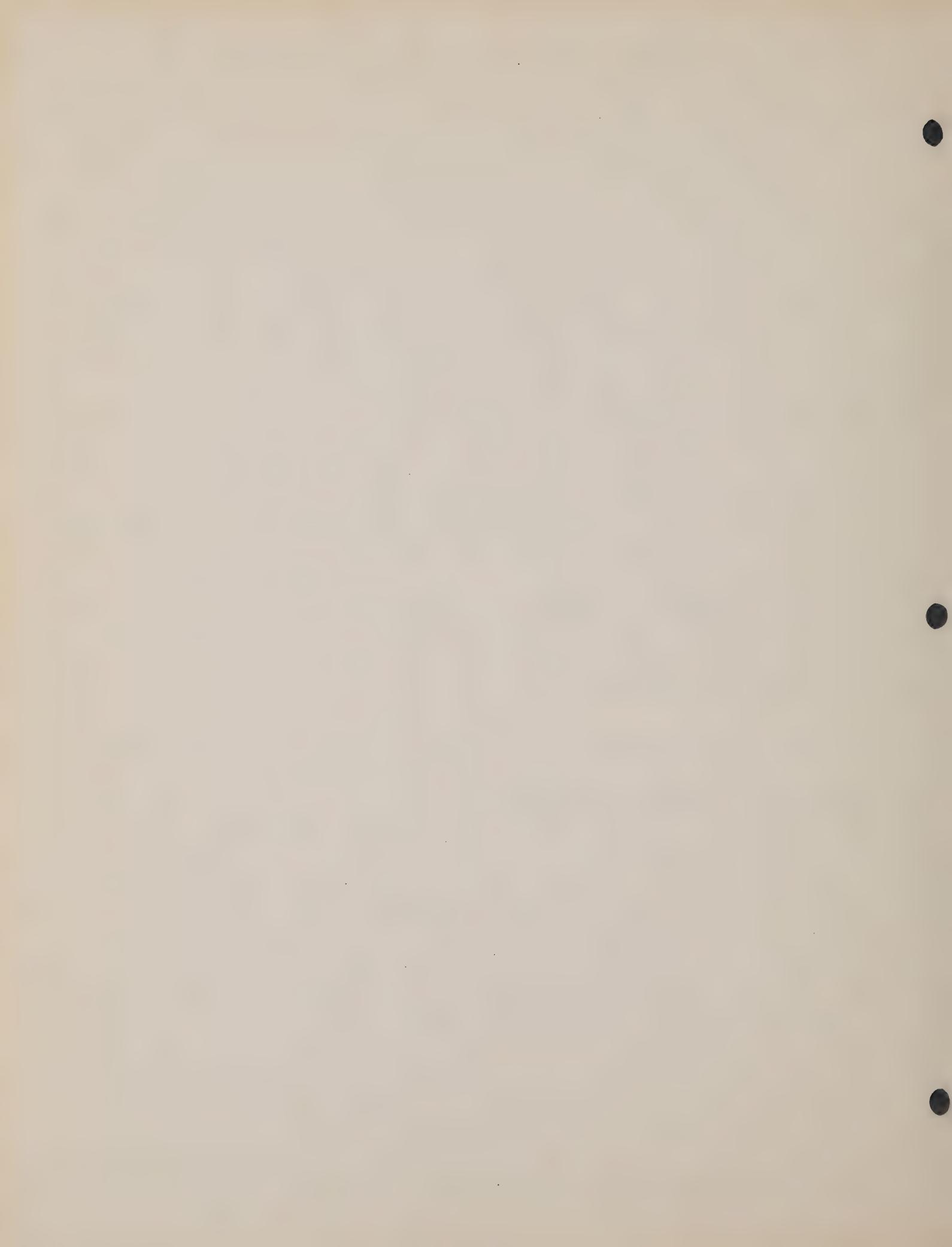
Perhaps nothing so characterizes all of pre-modern theology, and to a large extent also modern, as the conspicuous breakdown of logical consistency. All the arguments for the existence of God, His goodness, His attributes are in violation of the principle of ~~petitip~~ principii in that they assume surreptitiously at the beginning what they come out with at the end after a long process of bogus reasoning. Or they are based on something worse -- propositions repugnant to the moral sense thus defeating, to begin with, what they are trying to establish. Illustrative of the first procedure is mainly the ontological argument. Illustrative of the second is the emanation theory concerning which it has been well said: "For an eternal perfect Being to produce something lower and less perfect than itself is not only shocking to our moral feelings but contradictory as well" (John Wild, quoted by T. V. Smith, "Beyond Conscience," p. 96).

It is high time that we learn to realize that the traditional theologies were dominated by a prejudice derived from Greek philosophy, the assumption that we get at reality through thought and to rid ourselves of that prejudice. It was that prejudice which prevented men for over fifteen centuries from studying nature at first hand and basing thought upon the experience of the senses as material to interpret and organize. Likewise with thought which bears on the belief in God, the knowledge of the right etc. Instead of utilizing the actual experience of the will to maximum life and building on it both religion and ethics, the various human disciplines have resorted to analysis of concepts and formulations of abstract principles in the hope of arriving at religious and ethical truth. The principle enunciated by L. P. Jacks, "The experiment first, the argumentation second" (quoted by T. V. Smith, "Beyond Conscience p. 40) should be applied to all problems of religion, ethics and education. The only object to which that principle can be applied in the human disciplines is the will to live the maximum life.



The fact probably is that the traditional theologies are intellectual attempts to articulate the direction that life takes on when it attains self-consciousness and from being merely the will to live it becomes the will to salvation. That direction is away from the "blood and grime of our temporal world" into a world that is transcendent and sublime. Instead of saying as does John Wild (see Smith, ibid. p.96) that the eternal is actually derived from the temporal and an emanation of it, thus falling back again into the swamp of idealistic verbiage from which he was on the point of extricating himself, he should have conceived of the eternal as a dynamic process which is actualized in the new direction taken by the will to salvation as it emerges out of the will to live. From an existential viewpoint, the eternal never was on sea or land. It is an infinite becoming and not an actual being. This is why we should conceive of God as process and not as entity, for God is a term to designate all those phases of the new direction that life takes on in man which are indicative of life's infinite possibilities of growth.

"What claim has conscience on the knowledge of good and evil, ~~mark~~ before it works successfully?" This is the question with which T. V. Smith is wrestling in his book "Beyond Conscience." Cleverly as he discusses that question and refutes one defense of conscience after another, the fact is that the question itself is unreal and illegitimate. To that extent it proves the main contention of Dewey that the main trouble with traditional philosophy has been that it has posed unreal problems and that its solutions could not be otherwise than unreal. The reason the defenses of conscience are so easily proved to be untenable is that the statement implied in the above problem does not represent a literal description of fact. It is only a loose and half figurative expression of a fact which, if recognized, would



have made clear that Smith was merely shadow-boxing. Human life cannot wait until all the returns of our experiences are in before it is ready to act. Just because the human being wants to make the most of life, he would be paralyzed by the fear of missing his goal, if he were to refrain from action until he has made a close study of consequences and has chosen the one alternative most conducive to maximum life. The will to live compels, so to speak, the will to salvation to make up its mind quickly. Of course there is noting left for the will to salvation but to act on intuition, on a hunch. The mind acts that way not only in ethical matters but at every point at which it cannot see the outcome. I had no idea what the last sentence would be like before I wrote it out. Certainly not with the last paragraph etc. The only way in which the will to salvation can genuinely know good and evil is after its knowledge has worked successfully. What it knows before is just a sense of direction. Such is our actual experience with the knowledge of good and evil. Whatever certainty the will to salvation experiences with regard to that knowledge is nothing more nor less than part of its making up its mind. When we jump across a chasm we must be certain that we can make it, otherwise we are certain to lack the strength and spring necessary to take us across. The same is true of the knowledge of good and evil. If we act upon that knowledge half-heartedly by reason of doubt we make a mess of our action. This is basically all that is behind the "claim" of conscience or more correctly of the consciousness of good and evil, before the knowledge held in the consciousness works successfully. If that is the meaning of the statement implied in the above problem, and that is the only meaning which it can have in the light of actual experience, it is useless to take that statement literally and to base on it a problem which can have as much reality as squaring a circle or extracting the square root of a minus quantity.



VOL. X Oct. 30, 1940 - March 10, 1942

FLYLEAF: Nov. 7, 1940

"So long as we deal with the cosmic and the general, we deal only with the symbols of reality, but as soon as we deal with phenomena as such, we deal with realities in the completest sense of the term."

(W. James, Varieties of Religious Experience, p. 498)

I would rather be honest than president.

It is given to very few to "act out their dream instead of dreaming their action."

We are living in a world in which no alternatives are pleasant."

(May 16, 1941)

"I imagine that the "good wills" (men of good will) are more numerous than ~~any~~ thinks or than they realize themselves. It is another question how often they make mistakes; how often they let themselves be yoked to the enemy's chariot, or like a blind horse at the draw-well, to the windlass of a well in which there is no water left."

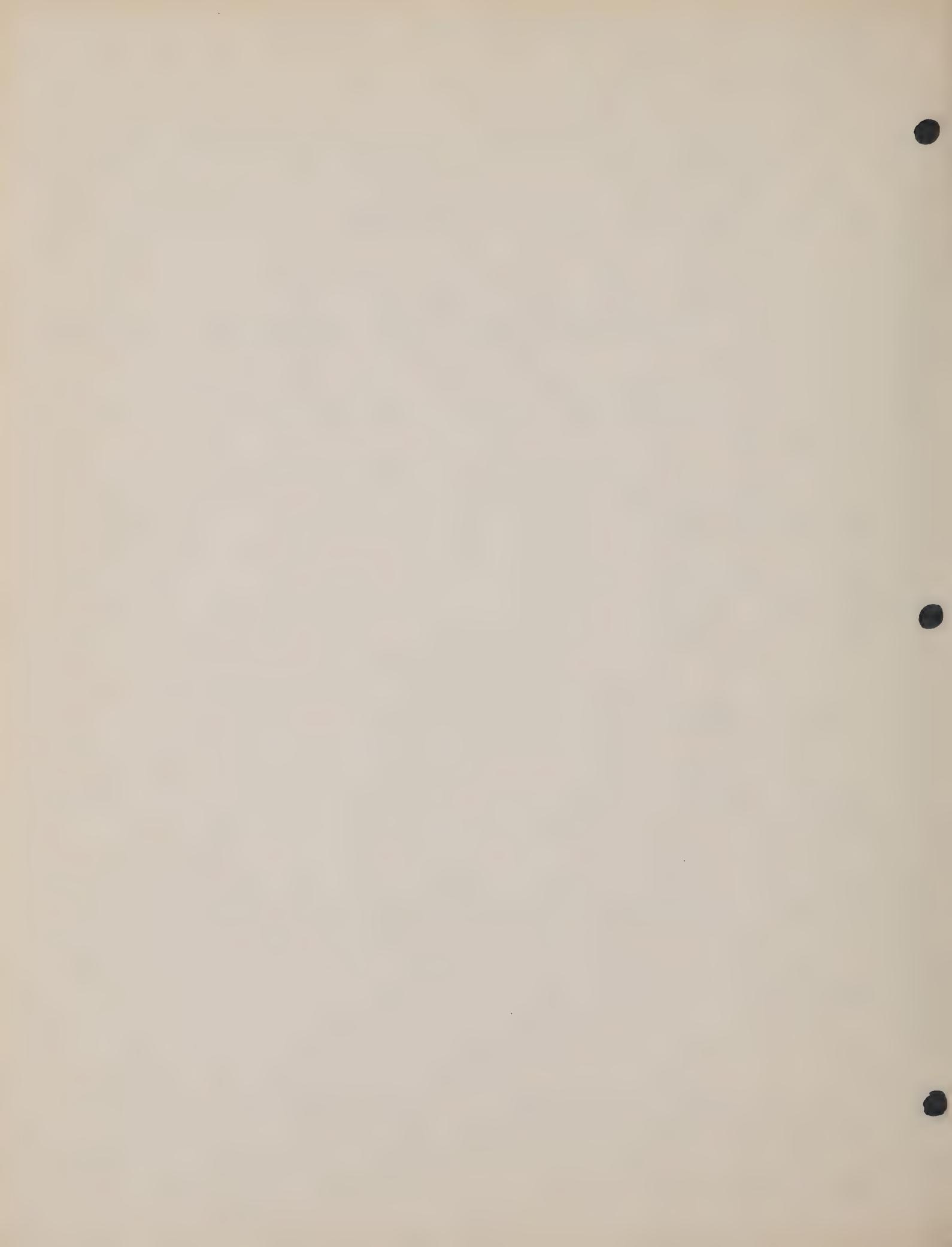
Jules Romains in Preface to Men of Good Will

The foregoing is an apt summary of my life (July 1, 1941)

"Action from principle, the perception and performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary and does not consist (sic) wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families; ay, it divides the individual, separating the diabolical in him from the divine." Thoreau (July 3, 1940)

"You will have to fight if you want to live at all" (God's Angry Man, Earlie, p. 6)

"It is dangerous to rely on the interpretation of courts as made by those who participate in them" Schmaya Levin, The Arena, p. 158, Aug. 1, 1941.



I did detest the assimilationist, independently of his political views, whether he was a temple-goer or a socialist. My only bitterness was against those who laid the dead weight of their inertia on the scale of Jewish decline" (ib. p. 162)

"For years he had been trying to cure people of illness by the method called psychoanalysis. The idea was the passion of his life. 'I came here because I am tired,' he said dejectedly. 'My body is not tired but something inside me is old and worn out. I want joy. For a few days or weeks I would like to forget men and women and the influences that make them the sick things they are.'

"There is a note that comes into the human voice by which you may know real weariness. It comes when one has been trying with all his heart and soul to think his way along some difficult road of thought. Of a sudden he finds himself unable to go on. Something within him stops....

"The lives of people are like young trees in a forest. They are being choked by climbing vines. The vines are old thoughts and beliefs planted by dead men. I am myself covered by crawling creeping vines that choke me."

"...she had thought too much and acted too little." From "Seeds" by Sherwood Anderson (Aug. 13, 1941)

"The secret of a joyous life is to be forever in a state of growth."

Oct. 8. 1941

"Life consists largely of doing what you don't want to."

"While I can see the Sphinx, I am not the Oedipus to hurl it down the abyss. Rather I am one of those who have been swallowed up"

Menorah Journal June 1918 (copied Nov. 6, 1941)

"Both ~~hard~~ to understand and easy to misunderstand" (Jan 29, 1942)

"The classical motives in journalizing are knowing oneself and knowing the world" (Feb. 1, 1942)



For those who wish to get clear of difficulties it is advantageous to discuss the difficulties well. Ariot Met. B, Ch 1. Feb. 7, 1942

"We would not let ourselves be burnt for our opinions -- we are not so sure of them as all that. But we might well let ourselves be burnt for the right of holding or changing our opinions" Nietzsche - Human All Too Human Vol II p. 333. (Feb. 10, 1942.

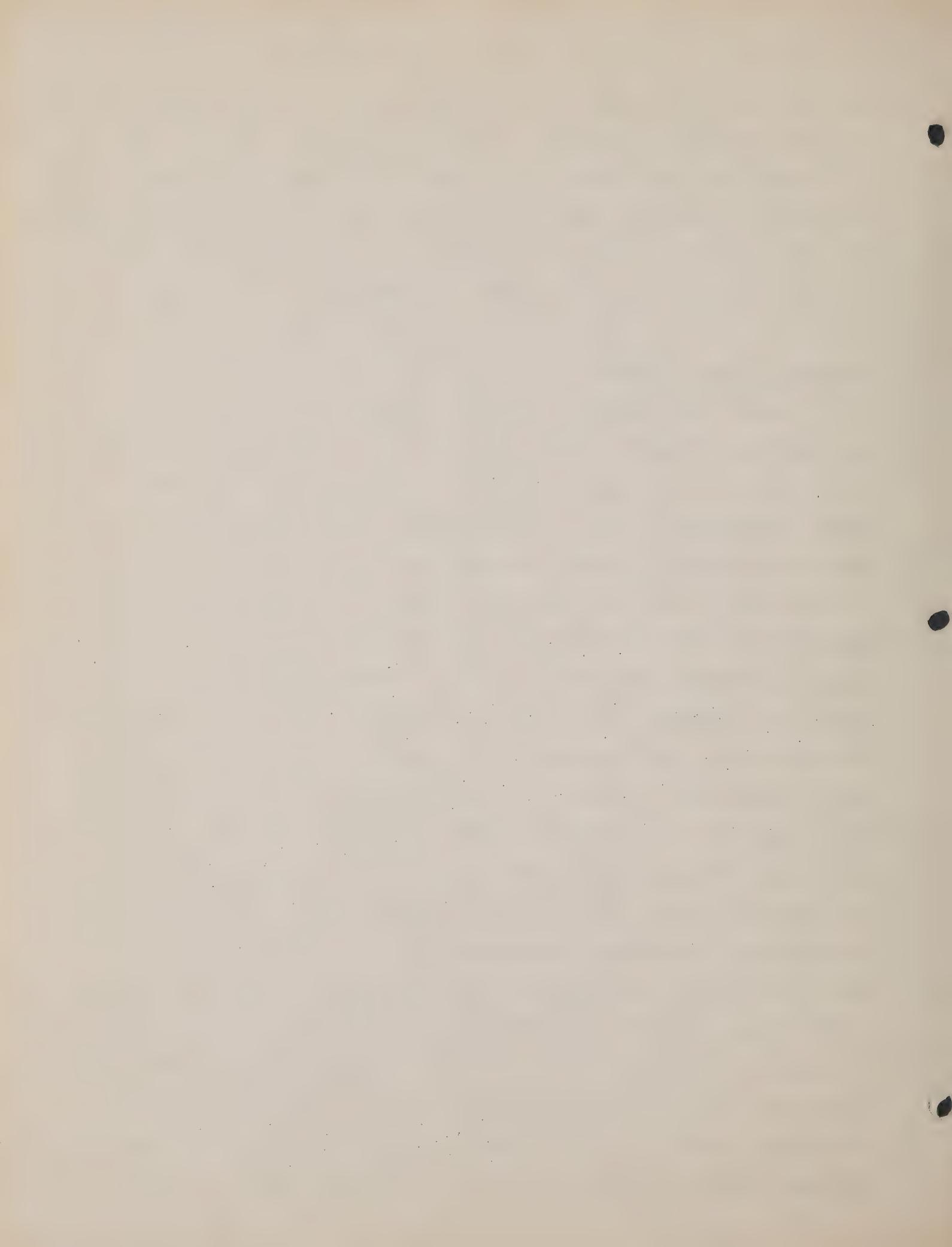
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Wednesday, Oct. 30, 1940

"We surely all recognize and make the distinction between what we want and what we need, between what we want and what we really want, between what we idly wish and what we really will." (T. V. Smith, Beyond Conscience p. 140). The generic term for what underlies the numerous instances of "what we really will" is the will to salvation.

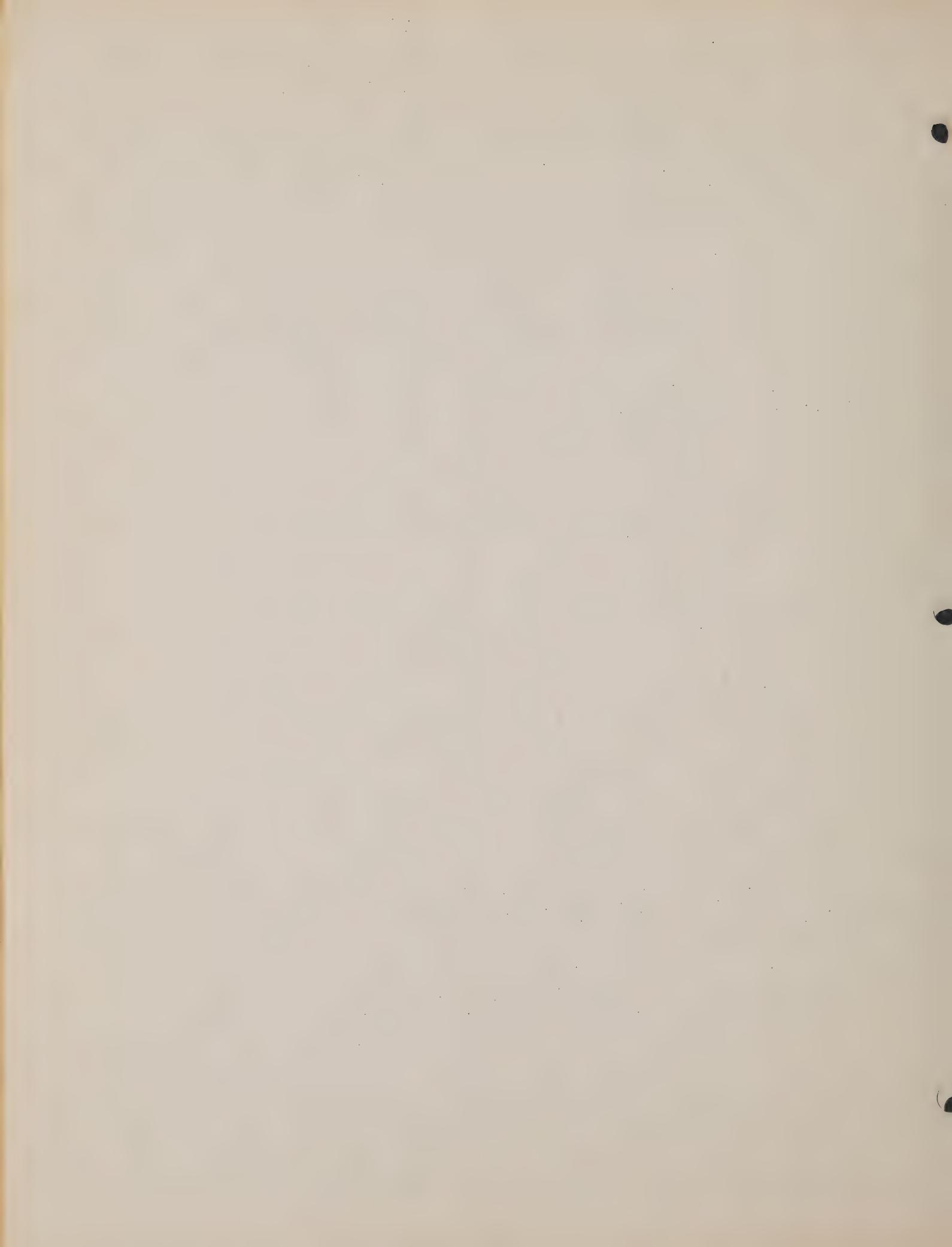
Where does conscience come into the picture? Conscience is the hypostasis of what underlies the various instances of assumed knowledge of what constitutes salvation and of the means thereto. T. V. Smith raises the question: what is there to validate such assumed knowledge? He takes up one after another the theological, the idealistic, the sociological, etc. arguments in defense of the dictates of conscience. Let us take the case of the conscientious objector to war. The question which Smith would raise with regard to such a person is: How does he know he is right? To be right he would have to prove 1) that his conception of salvation is the correct one, and 2) that keeping out of war at all costs is the only way to attain salvation as he conceives it.

The proper procedure, it seems to me, would be in the first place to pin down such a person to the source of the knowledge he claims to have of what salvation is and of the means thereto. That source must be either supernatural revelation, some authoritative code which he firmly believes to have been supernaturally revealed or universal reason



based on human experience. It is difficult to understand why Smith did not find it necessary to deal with the supernatural validation of the claims of conscience. That validation functioned down to our own day, and does to a very large extent still function. Even where it has ceased to function the effect of it undoubtedly operates in the actual lives of people. The habits and standards of conduct which constitute the bulk of social behavior arose spontaneously ages ago, and were given supernatural validation from the moment they became objects of reflective consciousness. That validation helped to make them second human nature, to undo which would result in the disintegration of society and perhaps of the human mind itself, as it is at present constituted. The very concept "conscience" was unknown before modern times. That was not because the human being did not claim to know what salvation was or how to achieve it. It was because such knowledge was always regarded as having been communicated to man from a superhuman source. Man was not regarded as capable of achieving the knowledge of salvation and of what he must do to achieve it.

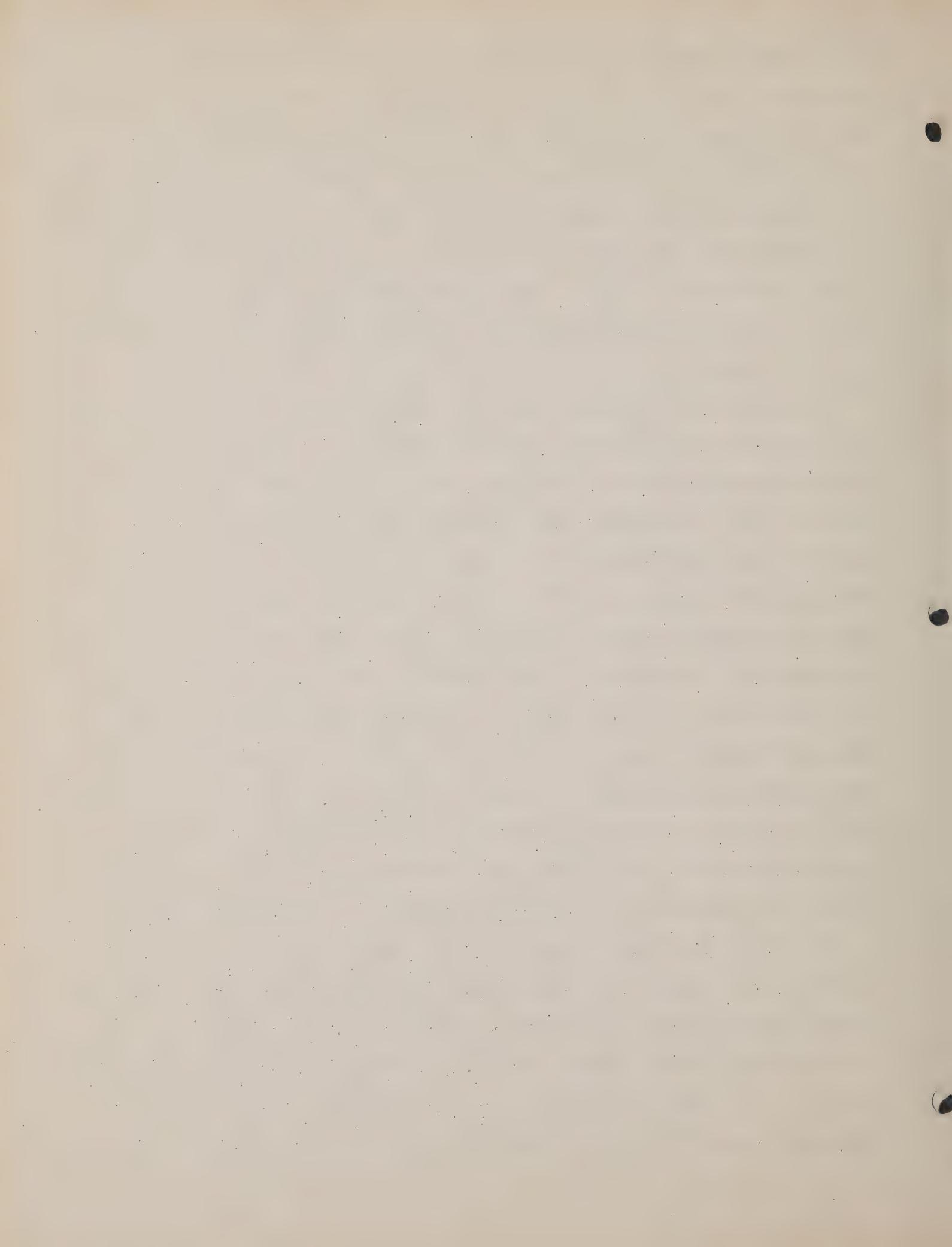
Nevertheless, if Smith is interested in disproving the reliability of all claims to the knowledge of what is morally right, he ought to have directed his first attack against the supernatural validation. He should have made clear that all such validation is based upon illusion, ignorance or misinterpretation of reality, to say nothing of pious frauds. His onslaught on the theological validation is no substitute for what should have been his first line of attack. The theologian does not resort to reason or intelligence as the main source of validation for whatever moral or religious beliefs he holds. The main source of validation is always with him supernatural revelation. As a theologian he tries to verify by reason what he accepts on faith. It is in a sense unfair to him to take him to task for not being entirely successful in his attempt to have reason verify his faith.



He has never committed himself to the success of his attempt in that direction. In fact, he insists on revelation as the basic source of what he affirms. The various proofs for the existence of God, developed by medieval theologians, certainly were not regarded by them as having any weight alongside what to them was the incontestable fact of supernatural revelation. By omitting this element in the theologian's validation of moral and religious knowledge, one not only treats him as a metaphysician, but fails to reckon with the heart of his contention.

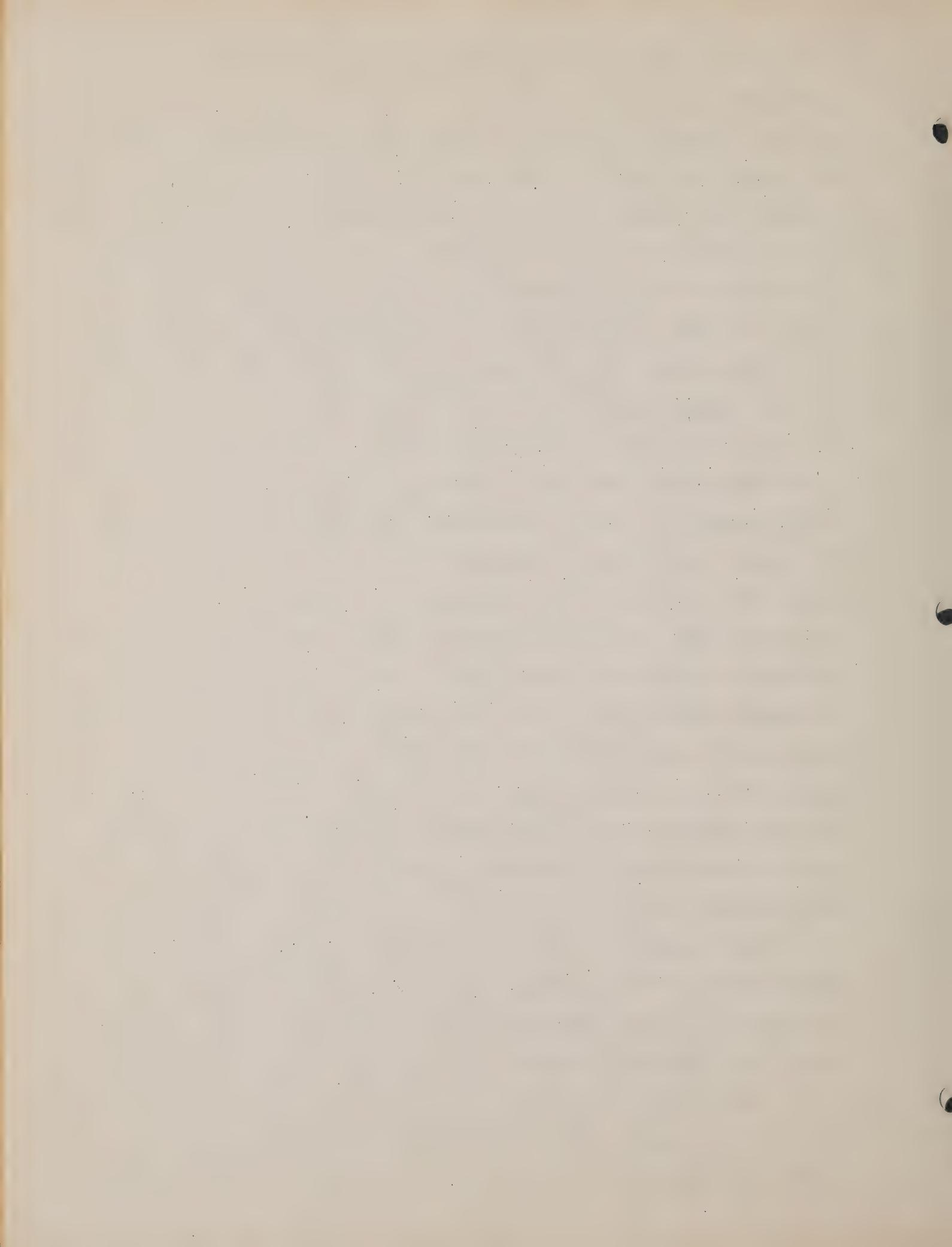
Conscience as a concept begins to figure in spiritual life as soon as the belief in the supernatural validation of moral and religious knowledge begins to waver, and man's own thinking comes to be relied upon for such knowledge. When this change comes about, men do not give up the habits and standards of conduct they had lived by for ages. They not only continue to live by them, but they feel impelled to rationalize their traditional mode of life. What then comes to be designated as conscience is a synthesis of the drive of habit, the particular principle or principles paraded as rationale, and the subsequent twinges in case the habit is violated. To treat this hypostatized synthesis as though it were a special organ of reason or of the soul, and take seriously its claims to knowledge of anything, not to say what we should strive for and how we can attain it, is certainly to set up a straw man to enjoy the pleasure of knocking him down.

A far more fruitful procedure in the consideration of conscience would be 1) to what extent must we go in reckoning with man's "second nature", when we find ourselves confronted by conditions which call for a change in that nature? and 2) how shall we transfer the accumulated force of "second nature" to what, after much deliberation and study we come to regard as salvation and the means thereto?



From the standpoint of salvation as the maximum life and utilization of all the good latent in the individual and society, we must be careful not to wreck "second nature" as though it were a structure that had to be torn down and a new one set up in its place. The conception of salvation as growth should warn us against such radical upturn of human institutions. In all likelihood the present debacle of Communism may be due to just such a radical attempt to break up "second nature." The debacle of Christianity may be accounted for in the same way. Private ownership of what one has managed to get hold of, and for which one has the sanction of his group, has become part of "second nature." To be sure, from what we now look upon as ethics, or even from a purely economic standpoint, society sanctions the possession of and control over much that it should not and that it does so only to its own harm. But the way to undo the phase of "second nature" which is responsible for the social wrong or maladjustment is not merely to ^{rest} ~~wrest~~ by violence from the present owners what society has hitherto recognized as theirs, but to dissolve gradually the forces of "second nature" which have carried the habit of private ownership far beyond the area where it functions usefully. The violent destruction of "second nature" before there has been laid a firm foundation for a "third nature", necessarily results in a resurgence of "first" or primitive nature.

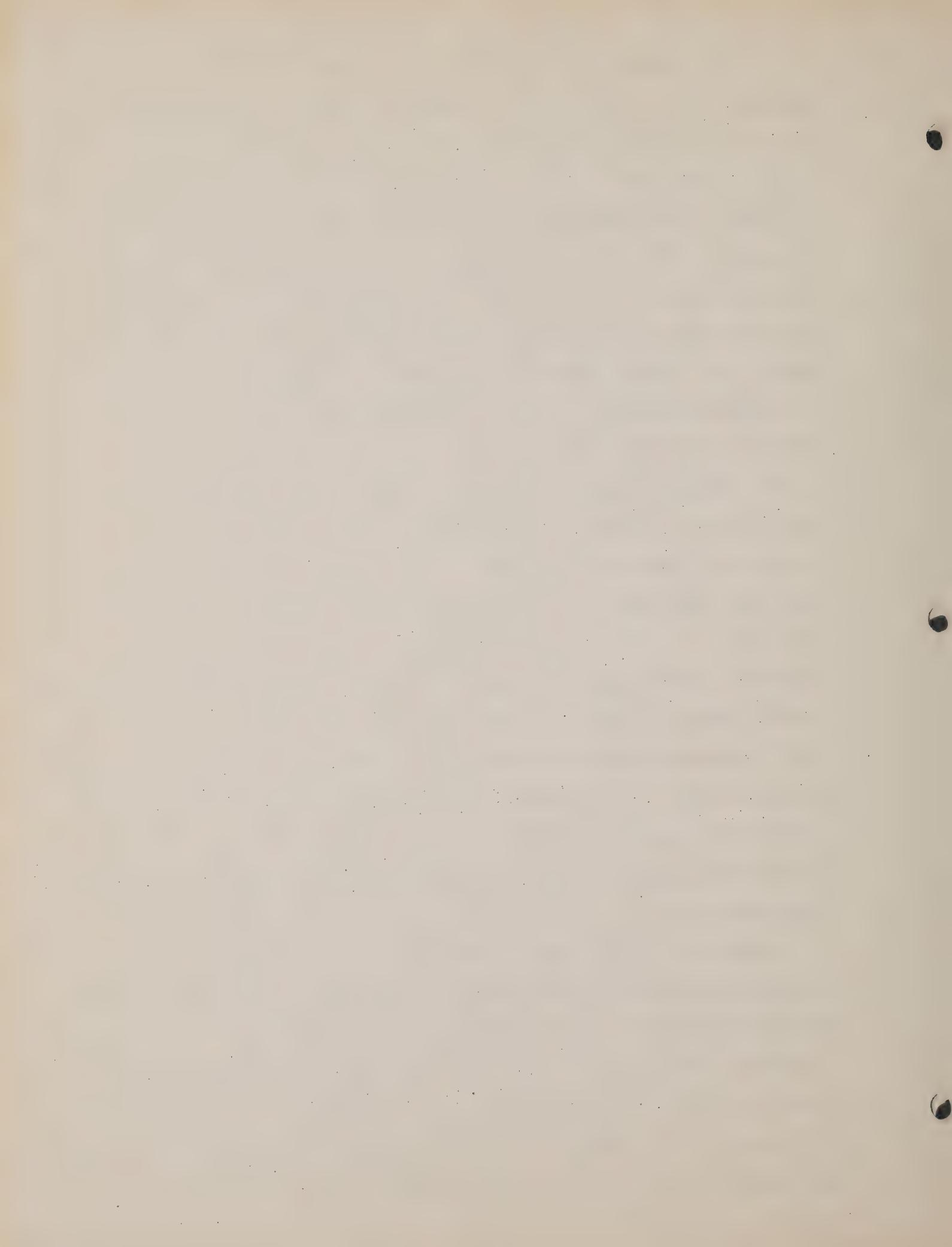
The same applies to the state and the family. The state as an expression of "second nature" is not as ~~Wittier~~ ^{Holter} and Rousseau believed "a moral entity created by men out of their will to self-improvement" but rather as Oppenheim has shown, the product of historical conditions in which a conquering people would set up the necessary machinery to exploit and hold in check a conquered people, whose land and possessions it would generally take over. The submission



to political authority which is part of human "second nature" is more than surly obedience to a powerful master, but has come to include a "rational" sanction which finds expression in the best of the ancient ethical literature (p.3) or Jesus' advice to render ~~under~~ Caesar what is Caesar's and Paul's ^{un}dict~~ion~~ about everyone retaining his place in society are all part of the "rationalization" of political authority which had its roots in violence but which thus rationalized became part of "second nature" and in that capacity has made possible the foreshadowing of political authority which is to be justified only as a means to salvation or self-betterment.

The state as a moral entity to further man's self-improvement or salvation belongs to the future or man's "third nature." It is only when man has shed much of his primitive egoism and greed that the state will be in a position to be a moral entity, i.e. based largely, even if not altogether, on autonomous instead of on heteronomous law and coercion. So long as these traits of primitive nature inhere in man, the state must exercise force. It must retain the prerogative of power to a considerable degree, even though in doing that it is thereby retaining the original impetus of the violence by which it or its predecessors came into power. Otherwise we shall have anarchy, which is very definitely a return to primitive nature.

In the case of the family institution, the change to "third nature" affects the relationship of the sexes. In the problem of the equality of the sexes we have an illustration of what we come up against when we do not reckon with the need of rendering the transition from "second nature" to "third nature" gradual instead of abrupt. To be carried out with a minimum of evil concomitants and with a maximum of beneficent consequences, the equality of the

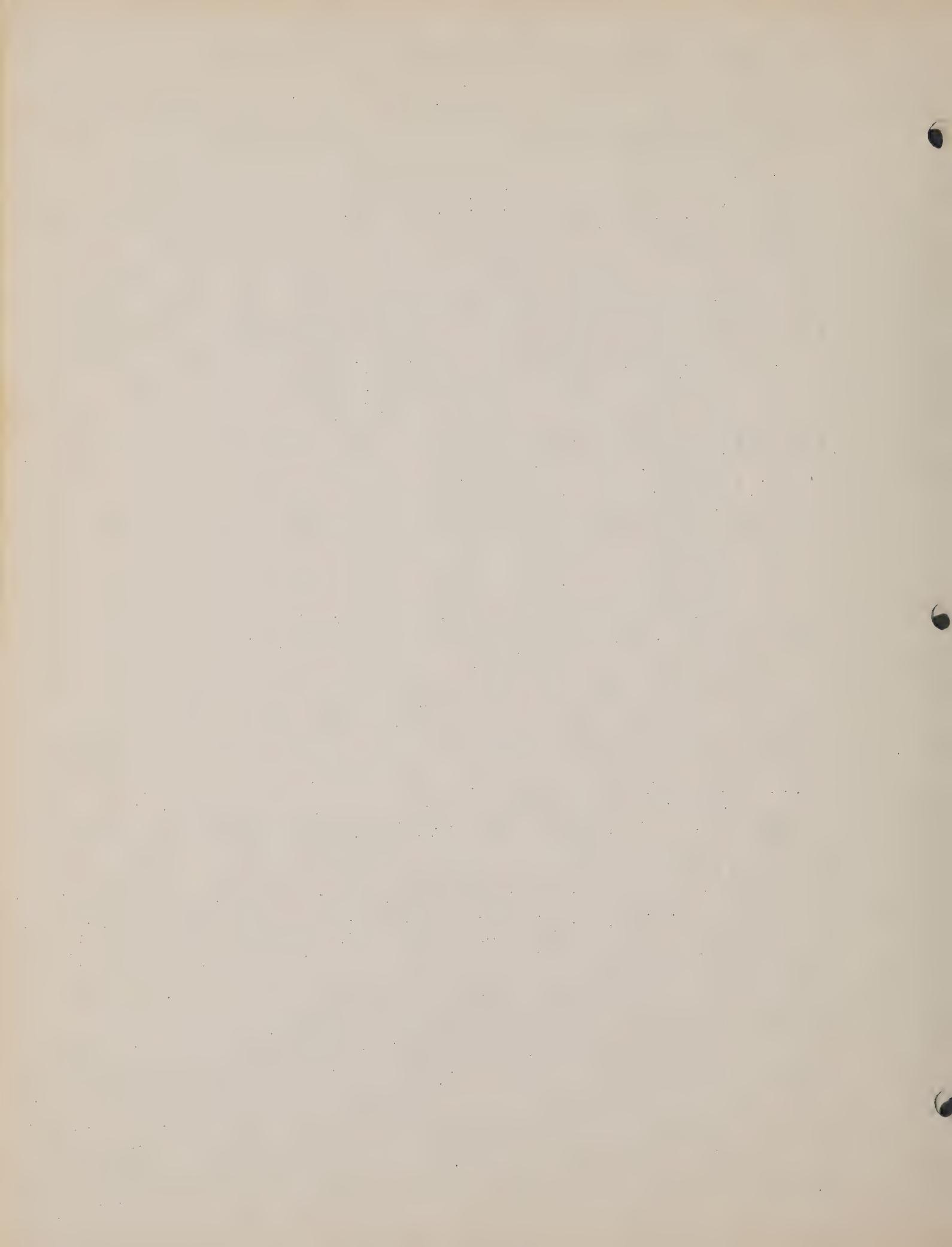


sexes should be attended by an economic and social reconstruction. Otherwise it must lead to the aggravation of economic crises and to sex license destructive of character and family life.

How the will to salvation is related to the will to live is brought out in the following passage from (p.4)?

The Philosophical Theory of the State, p. 119: "In order to obtain a full statement of what we will, what we ~~want~~ want at any moment must at least be corrected and amended by what we want at all other moments; and this cannot be done without also correcting and amending it so as to harmonize it with what others want, which involves an application of the same process to them. But when any considerable degree of such correction has been gone through our own will would return to us in a shape in which we should not know it again, although every detail would be a necessary inference from the whole of wishes and resolutions which we cherish. And if it were to be supplemented and readjusted so as to stand not merely for the life which on the whole we manage to live, but for a life ideally without contradiction, it would appear to us quite remote from anything we know."

What says in the foregoing describes only the formal difference between the will to salvation and the will to live.
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To be told that what we want/any moment must be corrected by what we want at all other moments does not help us decide which other moments are to serve as criterion for the corrections to be made. If with Nietzsche we subscribe to the philosophy of the will to power, we would regard all those moments in our own lives and in the lives of others, in which we deferred to the principles of kindness and humility, as rank waste. We would choose those moments during which we bullied our subordinates as furnishing



the ideal by which we should amend the moments when we yielded to sympathy and pity. This is just the trouble with much of the philosophizing concerning the will to salvation, or as they put it, our "real will" as contrasted with our ephemeral will. That philosophy ^{amounts} abounds to much analysis which treats of the form aspect of the problem of salvation and leaves us entirely uninformed concerning the specific content of what we are to regard as salvation, and the reason for regarding that content as salvation. This is why most of the political thinking is of little practical help. Take e.g. Rousseau's elaborate analysis of what it is that holds society together. We look to it ~~hopefully~~ hopefully expecting it would yield us what we need to know as to how we are to build up our conception of salvation. We learn from his Social Contract theory that the way in which the individual finds out what he should consider as maximum good is by surrendering his own individual will in return for the general will which is the result of mutual agreement of the citizens of a society to cooperate. Formally this is correct, but from the standpoint of actually knowing what the general will is to prescribe, which is the same as knowing what true salvation is to consist, we are left very much in the dark. It is ~~sufficient~~ sufficient to point to the fact that Rousseau's theories which were intended to overthrow tyranny can furnish and have actually furnished the most effective rationale for the worst tyrannies of our day, especially fascism. This is because he so deindividulized the will to salvation that it has been transformed by him into the worst kind of Frankenstein.

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